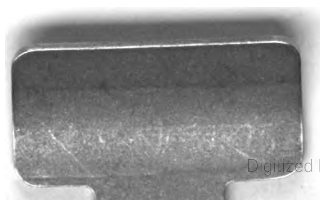

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Mr. L. H. G.

See-Saw,

OR

CIVIL SERVICE IN THE
DEPARTMENTS.

BY ONE OF'M.

Deposited
JUL 10 1887
University of Michigan

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DEDICATION.

TO ALL TRUE-HEARTED MEN AND WOMEN, WHO
BELIEVE THAT MUTUAL GOOD OLD-FASHIONED LOVE IS
THE ONLY BASIS OF A TRUE MARRIAGE, THIS WORK IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY THE

AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

Some one has very aptly said, that if a true chronicle of the incidents which occur in most lives could be written, that it would be the most interesting novel ever offered to the reading public.

Whether this shall prove true, we leave it to the readers of this volume to decide, for, as near as can be, it is the actual history of a life, the characters being real living facts, and only changed in name.

SEE-SAW.

CHAPTER I

A MARRIAGE.

"Oh, Margaret, have you seen the *Ventilator* this morning? Colonel Winston is married," exclaimed a bright-eyed rosy-cheeked young woman, as she met Margaret Wayland in the corridor of the Treasury Building, at Washington, on a pleasant July morning in 18—, at the same time placing the paper in Margaret's hands.

The paragraph to which Elie Tripp pointed was a telegraphic dispatch to the New York Daily *Ventilator*, and read as follows:

COL. RALPH WINSTON MARRIED.

Special to the New York Daily Ventilator.

MARIANNA, Ill., July 22.—It transpired to-day that Col. Ralph Winston was married at Hemphill last Monday to Mrs. Maggy Harker, *nee* Diggs. The ceremony was simple and very private, only a few of the lady's friends being present; while the Colonel was unaccompanied by a single friend from this city. Immediately after the ceremony the Colonel was driven to Mc'Augley, where a special train was in readiness to convey him to this city.

He left his bride as suddenly as he married her. She will not accompany him until next year. His most intimate friends were entirely ignorant of the step he contemplated, until to-day. The Colonel himself was not decided in the matter until late on Sunday evening.

As Margaret quietly read this dispatch a looker-on would hardly have supposed that each word of the telegram was a barbed arrow, that entered into her very soul; for so

perfectly did she control every indication of emotion, that she even deceived the gentle Elie, who loved her with all her heart.

Elie, in her excitement, and sympathy for her friend, betrayed much more emotion than the stately Margaret, whose dearest hopes were thus suddenly dashed to the ground.

A little paling of the cheek, a firm closing of the lips, and a passing look of fierce agony in the dark beautiful eyes, that was all that told her friend that the cruel blow had struck home; and she said, laying her firm warm hand on the cold, trembling fingers which Elie had clasped helplessly together, in her warm sympathy with her friend:—

“My dear Elie, this is no place for tears, or nervousness; I am strong, see,” and she opened and held out her well-shaped hand without a visible tremor. Margaret’s magnificent physique was doing her good service in this hour.

Ralph Winston had won her heart, and her faith in his constancy was as strong as her love was intense. Only thirty days before, they had parted for a few short months, which Ralph said, would “fly quickly by because we love and trust each other.”

His loving letters had reached her regularly ever since his departure, and this news had fallen upon her like a thunderbolt.

When the day’s work was over, Margaret repaired to a friend’s house. This friend, Mrs. Wills, had stood by her in other dark hours; and the Hon. Wm. Wills was always ready to perform a kindly service for this charming friend of his wife. When Colonel Winston came to Washington, his apparently sterling honesty, modest, unassuming manner and brilliant oratorical powers, made a favorable impression upon Mr. Wills, and for his own sake, as well as to

please Miss Wayland, this influential M. C., pushed the claims of Colonel Winston to a favorable issue.

When Margaret's pale face, upon which the day's repressed grief had left its impression, appeared before them, Mrs. Wills exclaimed:

"What is it? are you ill? I never saw you pale before."

Margaret could not control her voice, but handed the paper to Mr. Wills, with the fatal telegram outside. He carefully read it over and over, then said hotly: "He must have been some way inveigled into that marriage, or, he must be a scoundrel, whom you may be thankful to have escaped."

"If I had believed this of him," he continued, "I would never have walked across my threshold to serve him."

Margaret winced at this strong language, for the time had not yet come when she could turn the tide of her being into hatred, the blow had stunned her, the keen pain was yet to come.

She raised her hand as if to ward off a blow, and said: "Please don't, I cannot bear it. I would have staked my life on his truth."

With a gesture of indignation, Mr. Wills replied. "Why will you throw away a thought on such a worthless fellow? Why don't you find some one worthy of you?"

Margaret smiled bitterly and said: "I never sought his love, he gave it to me, as I thought, freely and fully." Then biting the quivering lip into steadiness, she added, "there is some mystery about it, and I will never rest until I have solved the riddle."

With many sympathetic words from her friend, and murmurs of indignation from her friend's husband, she passed on her way to her own home, where she had so often welcomed Ralph Winston, and where his face would be seen no more.

As she entered her room, she sought the table where her mail was deposited, and there, in his own familiar handwriting lay a letter; she hastily tore it open, and found the date to be on the morning of the day on which he had decided to take the fatal step which separated them forever.

Never had he written more affectionately or kindly, never seemed more sincere.

The dazed unhappy creature moved as though in a dream, she could not realize the fearful misfortune which had come to her. She had carried her sorrow through the day with a brave front, and the evening was still before her.

A weaker woman would have feigned head-ache and kept her room; but Margaret Wayland was not a weak woman, so, veiling her broken heart with a smiling face, she fulfilled all the social duties of that evening faithfully, and was even more brilliant than usual.

At a late hour she retired to her chamber, and there with no eye to witness her agony, the overcharged heart gave way.

Her intense nature asserted itself, and poured itself out in the language of despair.

"Why," she said, "O, why, has this thing come to me? Why must I be singled out for such an experience as this? Has God nothing better for me than to waste my life in vain longing for a home such as other women have, for honest love and faith?"

"I will not," she continued, "permit this grief to prostrate me; I will, I must, steady my nerves, and compel myself to think of something else."

Then looking around the room her eye fell upon a novel which she had purchased, because the reading world had made it fashionable, and being no novel reader, it had laid upon her table unopened for several weeks.

She said, "I cannot sleep, I will read this, and see if I can become interested in it."

To her great surprise she found that her mood fell in with the author's train of thought, and like an exquisite strain of music its words spoke peace to her troubled soul. When daylight approached and she closed its pages, this comforting thought went with her: "True love will conquer in the long run."

She was at her post of duty at the usual time on the morrow, self-control resumed for another day. There was no external evidence of the havoc suffering was making, except that a close observer might have thought:

"She looks twenty years older than she did yesterday."

Mechanically she performed every duty, smiled as kindly, exchanged favors as courteously, as though no burden lay upon her heart; but all the while she was saying to herself:

"I hope no one will ask me to utter a connected sentence, for I cannot."

Her friend, Elie Tripp, watched her with a sinking heart, and with the eye of love saw the nervous tension, the mental struggle, which reacting upon herself sent her home with a nervous head-ache before the day was over.

Margaret stopped at Elie's on her way home and with her own usual cheerful manner said:

"What is it little girl, what has so prostrated you?"

"O, Margaret," said Elie, "how can you bear it so? I never slept a wink last night, thinking of your sorrow."

"But you must not become ill over me dear," said Margaret, "I am stronger than you think."

Elie's sweet blue eyes filled with tears as she looked at her friend and thought: "She is so proud she will not let me see how much she grieves, but this will kill her, for I know how dearly she loved him."

Margaret, with a reassuring smile, kissed her friend and said:

"Sleep sweetly, for I mean to, and if you wish to serve me, control yourself."

Slowly the days passed by, and with nothing to hope for, nothing to expect, they were intolerable; mental anxiety became physical pain, and it seemed that body and mind must give way before it.

Margaret, assuming to be busily writing, kept her room as much as possible, and tried to become interested enough in her books to divert her mind, but would find that after reading page after page, she knew nothing of what her eyes had passed over; and reveries like this passed through her pre-occupied mind:

"The President promised Colonel Winston to appoint Z. B. Wexford as associate official at Bezoor; it must be nearly time for him to fulfill his promise. Ought I to say anything about it?"

If this man is a villain, which I cannot believe; and all the charges made against him before the Senate are true, which I do not believe; and he wants this particular man for associate for villainous personal ends; which I will not believe; the President will never forgive me if I remain silent in regard to that which may reflect on the administration."

In this state of mind Margaret addressed a letter to the President.

MARGARET WAYLAND,

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

KIND FRIEND:—One week ago yesterday for the third time in less than twenty years, God permitted another woman to come between me and happiness.

The singular phraseology of certain telegrams—two days in being framed, doubtless for my benefit—sent to the papers, makes them susceptible of strange interpretation.

There may be something to call forth profound pity for the man. I have as yet received no explanation.

If I have to engage in public work again, to save my life or reason, it will be in compliance with the resistless influence of fate, or Providence, not my own will ; and not in defiance of the conservative views, I understand you hold in regard to woman on the political platform.

There are strong indications that in spite of medicine and will-power, I shall be obliged to yield ; and in great fear of giving to the world in delirium, the seeming character of an important appointee of your administration, I have taken the liberty to address you ; and refer you to Colonel Strong for particulars.

He knows all the circumstances connected with the gentleman to whom I allude.

Sincerely,

MARGARET WAYLAND.

CHAPTER II.

RETROSPECTION.

In order clearly to understand the circumstances which made the character of Margaret Wayland, it will be necessary to take a retrospective glance at her early life.

The spiritual and intellectual natures grow like the physical, by what they feed upon, and strong characteristics may be easily traced to home surroundings.

The 22d of March, 1844, was the day fixed upon by the Millerites for the end of the world. Ascension robes were prepared by those enthusiastic believers, and their earthly dwellings put in order, that they might be ready to hear the call to "come up higher."

It was on this day, so fraught with human destiny, that the marriage of Eugene Wayland and Louise Church was quietly celebrated in Churchburgh at the residence of the bride's brother, Rev. Reuben Church.

Churchburg was a small unpretentious village, forty years ago, located in a pleasant portion of Northern New York, near the Western boundary of Vermont. Eugene Wayland taught the village school, and found a home under the hospitable roof of the village pastor. Here he formed the acquaintance of Louise, who had come from her Vermont home to visit her brother.

Eugene Wayland was the son of a neighboring farmer—the eldest of nine children—upon whose shoulders all the burdens of the family rested. His educational advantages had been limited to the common schools, and one year at the academy; but he certainly had a genius for teaching.

When the subject of employing the teacher was discussed at the school meeting, one of the committee an honest, humorous-looking farmer said, with a queer inward chuckle: "Eugene Wayland can neither read, write, nor spell; but he is the best teacher we have ever had, and I think he's the man if we can get him."

"If," as some one has said, "marriage is like unto a circle of which the husband constitutes the one-half, and the wife the other, each half finding attraction in what it lacks itself," the principle was aptly illustrated in this marriage.

Eugene was below the medium height, with piercing black eyes, dark hair, and a beard of decided auburn. He possessed indomitable energy, industry and perseverance, a strong will, robust health, and a most joyous disposition, always living in the sunlight. He was religiously a Presbyterian, and politically a Democrat.

Louise, on the contrary, was tall and slight, with blue eyes, and light brown hair; her face showed an innate refinement, although her diffident manner was a source of pain to herself and others. She was of amiable temperament but from delicate health was inclined to look on the sober side of life; was religiously a Baptist; and politically, (if a woman in those days may be said to have had any politics), a Whig.

Four children were the fruit of this union, Margaret, Alfred, Bertie, and Lewis. Margaret was the image of her father, with hair the exact shade of his auburn beard. If she inherited any of the Church characteristics, they did not appear physically; and it must be confessed that the proud mother would have been just a little better pleased if her darling had not had red hair.

Alfred resembled both parents. Bertie was as thoroughly the image of the father as Margaret, while Lewis seemed to have inherited only Church characteristics.

When Margaret was four years old—quite too young to remember anything of the place of her birth, except a few unimportant episodes—(in later life she could just recall running away to a neighboring uncle's and being ignominiously returned to the parental domicile; and she also remembered being taken to Sabbath school by her father and placed in the infant class, where her helpless little feet dangled in the air from the high seat where he deposited her), at this time her family moved to the western part of the state.

The five years spent here were devoid of incident, for our small heroine, except that the two sisters of Mr. Wayland were married; and in after years it seemed to Margaret these weddings were the events of her life, and that nothing was done in the house for many months but make cake and prepare for these important ceremonies.

Adjoining the Wayland home was that of Hayden Buffington, whose wife was an elder sister of Mrs. Wayland's and the latter having spent much of her time with this sister before her marriage, held Mr. Buffington in so high esteem, that her children were taught to consider his opinions infallible. So powerful were these teachings upon Margaret's impressible nature that she regarded this uncle with little short of reverence.

Esquire Buffington, as he was called, was the most influential man in all the section of country in which he lived, beloved and respected by all who knew him. He was very fond of children, and with his own four little girls, was very indulgent, while he petted Margaret as though she was the only little girl in the wide world.

Playing in the hay loft and hunting hen's nests were the especial treats at Uncle Hayden's, and no day was so bright as that on which he would join them in their happy play.

The pre-eminent thought of the Wayland's was to make their home influence such as should give their children, symmetrical characters, fitted for any sphere to which Providence might assign them.

The family discipline was the old-fashioned one of firmness and self-restraint, instead of the modern one of self-indulgence; yet these children all through their childhood regarded their parents with the utmost confidence and love. True piety was taught and practiced as of first importance, but was never made distasteful.

These children were full of strong, vigorous life, active, restless, and boisterous in play, and Margaret from having no home playmates but boys, was as ready as they for all romping games.

Another move was soon made by the restless father. The great west in those days had great possibilities for a family of boys, and Mr. Wayland was ready to push on for their benefit, selecting their home in Southern Michigan.

So much of the after life of Margaret hinges upon circumstances that date from this time, that it seems necessary to place before our readers many incidents of her home life and surroundings.

A new party in politics had been developed by the needs of the times, and Mr. Wayland became what was then called a Free Soiler, in which decision he was warmly supported by his wife.

It is said that two persons so closely related, will in time not only think, but look alike, and the experience of Mr. and Mrs. Wayland was not unlike that of others in this respect.

A distinguished divine, at about this period published a work on Baptism, advancing new arguments to prove that sprinkling was the Bible form of baptism. The arguments were based largely on the old Mosaic types and symbols.

Mr. Wayland read this book aloud to his wife, she feigning to be an interested listener, but with the mental reservation that she would not hear a word. In spite of her determination she became so deeply interested, that she read the book quietly by herself, unknown to her husband.

She took no letter from the Baptist Church to her western home. In vain Mr. Wayland urged her to unite with her church. At last she confessed that she had changed her views; and the house of the Waylands was no longer divided against itself; for she soon with her husband united with the Presbyterian Church.

One of Mrs. Wayland's cousins had been engaged in the revision of the Baptist version of the New Testament, and they took great family pride in their Baptist creed. To the family of Mrs. W. her change of views, and subsequent change of name was a severe blow.

"Louise must be entering her second childhood," was their bigoted comment.

A more homesick child than Margaret, in her western home, could not well be imagined.

She cried herself to sleep nights, almost invariably, for the first six months; while every letter from the Buffington cousins was the signal for a fresh burst of tears.

Mrs. Wayland had been for many years an invalid, but a peculiarly sensitive one, not willing to accept the inevitable fact and retire from the management of her household; but still holding the reins of government, and holding them with so arbitrary a hand, that domestic service became servitude, and Biddy after a few days trial, with arms akimbo and belligerent aspect, would announce:

"Yis, it's goin I am, ma'am, fer I don't know how to please yez, whatever I may do."

It was soon conceded that Margaret must assist in all the heavy work of the household most of the time.

The Wayland children were taught so emphatically, that education was the only sure capital their father could leave them, that books seemed an essential of true living.

Mr. Wayland believed that with fair common sense and a good education, one could easily become self-supporting, contending that one so fitted for life and its duties, had superior advantages to the mere tradesman or mechanic, who was educated in one line only.

Margaret was unwilling to lose a single day at school, and often arose at two o'clock on Mondays, to do the extra household work of that day.

Mrs. Wayland kept Margaret at home one quarter, before she was fourteen years of age, for the purpose of learning to spin; believing it a mother's duty to teach her daughters how to do everything.

Margaret naturally objected to this employment, but Mrs. Wayland said: "My daughter, you may marry a farmer, and have use for all practical knowledge, it is my duty to prepare you for every contingency."

In pursuance of this duty, Margaret was taught every detail of making a man's entire wardrobe, as well as a woman's.

So rigid was her training that it became impressed upon her mind, that as the eldest of the family, she must not only bear all the physical burdens, but must become responsible for all the moral wrong-doing of the younger members of the household.

She learned at an early age that the smallest thing which troubled her mother caused a sleepless night, and so bore her own childish sorrows silently, not daring even to confide in her father, lest in an unguarded moment he might be tempted to betray her; thus learning that self-repression and control which served her so well in after life.

Through a series of depressing circumstances, and a financial panic, Mr. Wayland became reduced from affluence to poverty. Margaret from that time was never free from the responsibilities of a mature woman; and upon the breaking out of the civil war, Mr. Wayland having enlisted, She was left the nominal head of the household. Circumstances soon rendered it necessary for some one to become the breadwinner; and our heroine took charge of the district school, in addition to the work of the little household.

It was finally decided upon the return of Mr. Wayland, who had been permitted a furlough, to remove the family to a Western New York town for the purpose of better educational facilities.

To do full justice to Margaret's character it will be necessary to disclose a weakness in the character of Mrs. Wayland, which was continually manifested before her children, viz: the intellectual superiority of her own family to her husband's.

This could not be questioned, but it was not always combined with business ability.

Margaret often said of her mother's eldest brother:

"Uncle Caleb was the most cultivated man I ever knew, and as such attained a high social position in the most cultivated circle of a large eastern city; but his wife, with far more executive ability, contributed to the support of the family, by the proceeds of her literary work.

It was said of him by one of his cousins: "Knowledge is power. What would Caleb Church be without it."

While Mrs. Wayland idolized her only daughter, she did not hesitate to express her belief, that, as she inherited the Wayland looks and characteristics, she was also inferior in intellectual ability to her brothers.

Margaret learned the ten commandments too well, to express her feelings audibly, but she reasoned with herself thus :

“Father is just as good as mother, and is insulted by this imputation. I will show the Church family that I will accomplish as much in life as my brothers, by making up in application what I lack in natural gifts.”

These thoughts were wholly confined to childhood ; but they furnished the incentive which induced Margaret’s superhuman efforts to obtain an education.

She had a natural talent for memorizing, and being wholly devoid of diffidence used this talent to advantage.

One of the incidents of her school life in this connection was as the sole member of a class in natural philosophy.

She said to her teacher :

“How far shall I learn to-morrow?” thinking, “I will exceed the lesson whatever it may be.”

Her teacher replied, “as far as you can,” until one day the child had committed so long a lesson that the teacher’s patience was exhausted, and stated lessons were given thereafter.

Margaret applied herself closely to her studies, but soon found that her strength was inadequate to the double duty devolving upon her (the care of the family and her school work), and being forbidden by her physician to look at a book, she gave up her studies just as she was entering upon her graduating year.

At this time feeling the necessity of occupation, she accepted a situation as clerk in a fancy goods store. She soon made her services so valuable to her employer that she was promoted to the superintendence of the business.

While engaged here, her employer was arrested for an attempt at arson, the case attracting universal attention.

Miss Wayland was an important witness in the case, and became so deeply interested in the proceedings of the law courts, that it influenced her whole future life.

Her occupation now being gone she again entered school determined to secure a collegiate education at all hazards; but her health would not admit of the severe mental strain, and she was obliged to abandon all hope in that direction.

Her great disappointment bordered on despair, but with characteristic determination the brave girl once more took up the burden of a toilers life, and left her eastern home to take charge of the business interests of an eastern firm in Putnam, Mich. Her life in this city was passed in the positions of superintendent, and proprietor of the store of which she had charge.

In the meantime she was diligently reading law, with, and for a brother whose defective eyesight precluded the possibility of evening study, and this devoted sister became eyes for him, that he might attain a profession for himself.

One Friday evening soon after she came to Putnam, Miss Wayland was conversing with a friend at an evening entertainment, when a tall, dark gentleman of commanding presence, iron-gray hair, and full beard, passed directly in front of them, and with some light remark addressed the lady at her side, then with a low voice said:

"Please introduce me, will you not?"

The lady complied, and Miss Wayland found herself looking into eyes that sought hers with a strange persistency, and her hand clasped by one which actually trembled with some earnest emotion.

CHAPTER III.

A FLIRTATION.

It would be impossible to define with precision, Miss Wayland's impressions regarding the unconventional episode of the church social.

She could scarcely have expressed her own thoughts; at least they were prejudicial to Mr. Churchill.

His appearance had not impressed her favorably as she had seen him come and go from church accompanied by his beautiful young daughter, three sons, and a housekeeper; who was a distant relative, and an estimable woman.

Mr. Churchill always exchanged greetings with his friends, in the most cordial manner, impressing them with his personality, and convincing them of his delight in their presence. His remarks were always pleasant and satisfactory, and everything stamped him as a thoroughly popular man.

Among Miss Wayland's early acquaintances in this church, was a Mrs. Morgan; the wife of a man of the highest business and social standing, and a powerful political leader.

Mrs. Morgan and Miss Wayland were mutually attracted from the first; yet it was with no little surprise, that Margaret received the proposition from Mrs. Morgan to make her house her home for some months. Mrs. Morgan, was on this morning, quietly transacting some business at the store counter, and as she made the smiling proposal, added :

"Mr. Morgan's business will compel his absence from home much of the time this summer, my house is large, I need companionship, will you come?"

"Margaret's eyes wore a startled look, for she had only known Mrs. Morgan incidentally in the store, at church, and riding by with her husband, who was devoted to her; but she saw at once the advantages of such a position, and replied:

"I am sure, staying in your charming home would be delightful; I will be glad to come to you."

Mrs. Morgan was one of the ladies of prominence and influence in Putnam, popular with all classes; but especially beloved in the younger social circles. No one could enter her home without being impressed by its genial atmosphere, and feeling a warm sense of comfort.

"The old came to her for love and sympathy, the young for help and direction. She had a keen sense of enjoyment, and seemed gifted with the power of imparting that gift to others.

She had seen very little of Miss Wayland, but had observed her closely in those few encounters, had been impressed with her earnestness and zeal in whatever she undertook, her evident superiority to the position she occupied; and, more than all else, had marked the paling cheek, the result of long walks to her distant boarding place, and lack of home associations when she reached it.

Mrs. Morgan said to herself, "Why should I not share my pleasant home with this brave girl, who is uncomplainingly doing her duty in the place God has assigned her?" And, true to her purpose, she immediately put it in execution.

How bright the world might be if there were more women who would welcome others into the sunlight of their own happiness.

Miss Wayland, in accepting this gracious invitation, was lost in wonder that superb Mrs. Morgan, with her grace and culture, and knowing her so little, should have conceived

the idea of inviting her to her pleasant home, simply for her companionship.

Mrs. Morgan, in her bright way, said :

"Come as soon as you please, your room is ready for you."

"I will come at once," said Margaret, with a grateful look and smile.

She was soon in possession of her pleasant room, and to all intents and purposes, a member of the family.

Her life had been too full to leave any room for romance, and she knew absolutely nothing of the affairs of the heart ; but the time was coming, which comes to all women sooner or later, and the man had already crossed her path.

Mr. Churchill persistently sought her society, and manifested the greatest interest in her at all times, and in all places when they chanced to meet.

After one of these meetings, after a fashion she had of communing with herself, she said :

"What does he mean? Certainly he can have no serious intentions toward a self-sustaining young lady like me."

Then, softly smiling, she continued : "What does it matter anyway? If he seeks only an idle pastime, I am surely strong enough to enjoy his society, and still remain heart-free."

Mrs. Morgan and Margaret soon adopted the nightly habit of making themselves comfortable in dressing gown and slippers, and ending the day in a quiet chat.

Margaret only awaited this occasion to ask her friend a few questions.

Mrs. Morgan, in a creamy, soft-looking wrap, with cascades of lace on front and sleeves, reclined on a crimson couch, half-sitting, half-lying, her pale, patrician face turned toward Margaret, who was sitting in a large rocker, her feet

outstretched on a luxurious ottoman, the picture of rest and comfort.

She wore a gown of blue cashmere, trimmed with some kind of fluffy material, which softened her somewhat radiant style of beauty, for the long hair of golden bronze which fell in heavy folds below her waist, her bright cheeks and dark velvet eyes, made a brilliant picture for the eye to rest upon, and Mrs. Morgan was thinking:

"How these few weeks have changed her, she looks so well and happy."

Not a word had been said for some time, when suddenly she asked:

"Who is this O. S. Churchill?"

"One of our wealthy merchants," said Mrs. Morgan, "who is related to, or connected by marriage with nearly all the best families in the city."

"I thought there must be something besides his personal appearance to elicit such unusual attention."

"Yes, he is very much liked. You know, of course, that he is a widower."

"And so courted by all the mammas with marriageable daughters," added Margaret, with a laugh.

"He is scarcely regarded as a marrying man, I think," Mrs. Morgan replied, "he makes himself agreeable to all ladies, but does not devote himself to any in particular; he is fond of society, and seeks that which is most congenial."

A quizzical smile rested on Mrs. Morgan's lips as she made the last remark, for she had not been an uninterested looker-on in Gath.

Margaret said, musingly: "What do people see in him to like, I wonder; he is certainly very ugly, and absolutely coarse in dress."

"That is a hobby of his," replied her friend,—"you know most men have one—he is really an estimable man in his

way; people of position in the west, who have grown up with the country do not consider elegant dress as essential to dignity as they do in the east.

"The individuality of the west allows people to do much as they please in non-essentials; and, if they please to be peculiar, there is no settled public opinion to make it unpardonable. Everybody is a sort of public opinion to themselves. I think when you are once acquainted with Mr. Churchill, you do not mind his eccentricities."

"It all seems a lack of refinement to me," said Margaret, "there is certainly no excuse for a man going to church in such unsuitable apparel."

"Perhaps not," replied Mrs. Morgan, "but I question whether he thinks of its suitability."

"Is he a member of the church?" asked Margaret.

"No, he does not care for it in the sense that you and I do. Mr. Churchill is like Mr. Morgan, only a paying member of the society; he believes that without schools and churches we should lapse into barbarism, and he is willing to help support them for their elevating influence. He says, 'that investment is best which tends to the general good.' It is his especial pride that he lives an irreproachable life, and is bound by no creed."

"Well," said Margaret, "I suppose that I must adopt the general opinion, and proceed to admire Mr. Churchill at once, for I have been repeatedly told that I must adapt myself to the usages of my place of residence."

"There is nothing compulsory about it," answered Mrs. Morgan, with a light laugh, "but as a principle, I do think that it is always better to conform to your surroundings, and thus avoid eccentricity."

"I certainly do like the west," said Margaret, "and I mean to make it my future home. I like the friendliness of its people, and their earnestness of purpose always

impresses me with a sense of vigorous life and strength that means growth."

The Sunday following this conversation Mr. Churchill, with his entire family, occupied his own pew, and at the close of service announced that he would remain to Sabbath School.

"Why, papa, what is going to happen?" questioned his young daughter.

If the daughter was surprised, the congregation was no less so, when Mr. Churchill made his appearance in the Sabbath School room. In a careless, nonchalant manner he made the rounds of the classes, expressing much interest in the infant class, and at last reached that of which Miss Wayland had charge.

"I have performed my religious duty of inspecting the school," said he, "I have found it in excellent condition with a very fine corps of teachers, and all doing their work well."

"Am I, then, to be honored with your criticism," said Margaret.

"You? Not at all," said he, "you are beyond criticism," looking admiringly into her eyes, as she raised them to his face.

Margaret felt instinctively from that moment that her vicinity had been his objective point from the first, and that the time was approaching when this man would be to her a strong power for good or evil.

Mr. Churchill was evidently in fine spirits, and inclined to make the most of his time with the object of his admiration; for, even while holding the book from which they sang the closing hymn together, his eye fell upon these words:

"Make me, Oh, make me thine," and directing Margaret's attention to them, he said in an undertone:

"I could sing those now with a meaning."

"And address them to whom?" she said laughingly.

"To the brightest eyes in Christendom," he replied, emphasizing the words by an expressive glance.

Mrs. Jones said, "What can have brought O. S. Churchill to Sabbath School?"

Her friend, Mrs. Smith, answered, "O, some new face has caught his roving fancy, and so he devotes himself to that, in this way."

"Can it be Miss Wayland, I wonder; he certainly stayed with her longer than anywhere else."

"O, no, you are mistaken, he only stayed during the singing."

This conversation was but a type of other conversations that Sabbath afternoon, as the unheard of incident was discussed.

The only person who could have enlightened them, was to all appearance as curious and ignorant as they.

Mrs. Morgan did not go out that day, and at dinner Mr. Morgan said:

"Miss Wayland, as you have performed religious duty for the family to-day, tell us where the text was, what the sermon was about; and the number of officers, teachers and visitors at the Sabbath school."

"It seems to me that you are insatiate in your curiosity," she replied, "the most striking feature of the day was the presence of O. S. Churchill at the latter place. Everyone seemed to think it a mark of impiety for him to be there at all. I believe he is a heartless flirt, though he does not seem as homely and unprepossessing as at first, and his eyes are very striking, they are so black and shining."

"He has doubtless discovered a new attraction in Miss Wayland's bright cheeks and dark eyes," said her host smilingly.

"Thank you for the implied compliment, Mr. Morgan, but that is all conjecture."

"Well, he is a genuine good fellow, Miss Wayland. He is one of my personal friends, and you could not do better than to win him. It is a great waste of valuable time for a young lady like you to employ her time in measuring off laces and ribbons—really life is too short and you have no idea what opportunities you are missing. If you would expend half the energy to make yourself agreeable to gentlemen that you do to secure customers, you would soon be the centre of an attractive home circle. Suppose you take my advice and act upon it, we will give you a grand wedding. If you say so, I will speak a good word for you with Mr. C."

"No, thank you, he evidently knows how to use his own eyes with very good effect," said Margaret.

The following week Mr. Churchill began a series of calls at the store, ostensibly for the purpose of supplying the family needs, with such purchases as he might make.

On the occasion of one of these calls, he said:

"I have to drive out on the road several miles to-morrow to inspect repairs"—he was an extensive stock-holder in a toll road, which was the favorite drive for all the people of that section—"and," he added, "I would like to combine business with pleasure if I can induce you to accompany me."

"But, Mr. Churchill, it would scarcely be business-like on my part to leave the store during business hours."

"I will make good all the loss," said he, for he saw by her manner that his point was gained.

They were soon on the way, and Mr. Churchill talked gravely of her business affairs, of the road over which they were traveling; of the church, of the people she had met;

but not a word of his own personal feeling; he was warily drawing her out.

The carriage stopped on the return trip at the door of a stock-holder, who was also a deacon of the church. Mr. Churchill had some communication to make about the road. The deacon came forward with a bow, his face glowing with pleasure and surprise.

"You have my entire approval," he said smilingly, "the corporation will vote unanimously for the new stock-holder."

Miss Wayland with heightened color looked inquiringly at Mr. C., and he smiled back in her eyes, a reassuring answer, as much as to say:

"Never mind, it is just as well now as later."

This ride was followed by another in a few days; and with merry laugh and jest the hour passed quickly by, while their interest in each other grew and deepened.

As they reached home Mr. Churchill said: "The doctor and cousin Willis Hosner stood on the opposite side of the street when we came in from our drive the other day."

"Did they? I did not notice them," said Margaret, abstractedly.

"Yes," he continued, "the doctor said to cousin Will: 'Do you know I think it would be just like Churchill to go and marry that girl! What do you think of that?'"

"I should naturally infer that your friends thought all you had to do to marry any girl you pleased, was simply to make up your mind to do so," said Margaret.

Her questioner felt the well-merited rebuke, and instantly replied:

"Well, I do not think so." Miss Wayland thereafter steadily declined accompanying Mr. Churchill on his business trips; and their acquaintance was again limited to casual meetings.

One night as Mrs. Morgan and Miss Wayland arranged themselves comfortably for the usual evening chat, Mrs. Morgan with some apparent reluctance, and with that manner which invites confidence, said:

"It certainly is a mystery to me, how you can have any liking for your present business calling."

"I assure you it is an acquired taste if I have any," replied Margaret, "but I work at it just as I do everything I undertake, with all my might."

"In the days when I used to do the work for the household, I would rise at two in the morning on Mondays, and do as much work before school time as one would ordinarily do in an entire day. Then I would go to school and attempt to do the usual amount of brain work there. Everything went wrong on those days at school; indeed my lessons were 'all Greek to me.'"

"How could your mother permit you to do this?" said Mrs. Morgan.

I had to deceive her as to the time of rising. When she discovered what I was doing she told me that if I ever again arose at that hour she would keep me from school all day as punishment. After this I did not look at the time when I arose, and could truthfully say when asked, that I did not know the time. I had been taught to believe that life was of no value without an education, and that I must have that at whatever cost or sacrifice. These Monday experiences had been going on for years, and now seemed more necessary than ever; for my mother became so ill that I only left her bedside to recite. I felt that I must make up the time lost, by teaching a summer term of school.

I soon discovered that I was overtaxing myself, for my memory failed me and my head became so confused that I was forced to give up study entirely.

"You must have been seriously disappointed at this failure of all your hopes," said Mrs. Morgan.

"My mother was too ill, and I too benumbed, to realize the misfortune at the time. When my mother was convalescing, a lady who had just opened a fancy goods store, called to say, that some one who had known me as a pupil at the academy had suggested that I would be just the person for whom she was looking to act as a clerk in her establishment. The idea was distasteful to me, but on referring her to my mother it was decided that I accept the situation.

My first day's experience was inexpressibly tiresome. I looked about me—there did not seem to be a useful thing in the whole building. I said to myself:

"Is it for this that I have worked and studied all these years?" Must I stand here and cater to the vanity of my sex, instead of, as I had hoped — trying to elevate them?"

I weighed it all carefully at the close of the day, and said determinedly:

"This will not do, anything that is worth doing at all, is worth doing well; and I will make even this work a pleasure. It may be that it has its mission, the mission of the beautiful. Do you remember, Mrs. Morgan, that poem of Longfellow's, which says:

"Nothing useless is or low,
Each thing in its place is best,
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest."

From that time I began to love my work in a certain way, and to reason after this fashion: "Some one pleases their artist eyes by these combinations of colors, and buys the articles; another someone perhaps, feeds her hungry children by their manufacture; while yet another class, myself among the number, are supported by selling them from behind the counter."

I went on for some months at this work, rather enjoying it than otherwise for a time, but when my health was established as I supposed, the old irresistible longing for study beset me again, and I returned to school, only to find that I could not endure the mental application necessary to keep up with my classes.

My French teacher would say, with a compassionate look:

"Ma'amselle has headache to-day," when I would stumble over a lesson, which I knew I had once thoroughly committed; but which had utterly escaped me before I had reached her.

In one short month I had given up forever the idea of any further attempt in that line. In my agony of soul I was rebellious, and sinful, in my arraignment of God. I tried to forget all that I had ever learned, and, I am afraid, succeeded only too well.

I was solicited to take a position as teacher, in more than one school, but I declined. I said I had done with books forever. I felt completely heart broken. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, I think so," said Mrs. Morgan. "Your story is as pathetic as an affair of the heart."

"It was an affair of the heart," she replied, "for it nearly crushed mine."

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT CAME OF IT.

Apparently Mr. Churchill's discomfiture was only momentary; for he soon resumed his calls at the store, and they became more and more frequent.

"I cannot live twenty-four hours without seeing you; if you do not pass my store during the day, I have to come to yours," was his salutation one morning as he called.

After this, Margaret studiously avoided passing that way, for she did not wish to seem to be seeking him; although she was more interested in him than she cared to acknowledge, even to herself.

They gradually fell into a habit of riding at evening, always taking the favorite drive on the toll road. This road led to a chain of beautiful lakes, the shores of which were fringed with great overhanging pines. If anything had been wanting to make these rides enjoyable, the charming scenery would have supplied it.

Margaret began to think that she had done this man's character great injustice. She was gradually becoming aware that he was persistently trying to surprise from her the true state of her heart.

"I seem to be wholly unable to get any clue to your real feelings toward me," he said on one of these occasions.

"I answer no indirect questions," said Margaret, "and indirection in any sense, is quite foreign to my nature.

"I believe it," he said, "you are the very soul of truth." Once in a laughing way he said to her, "when I marry, you will still be my friend, I hope."

"Certainly," she replied, "when will I begin to prove my friendship under those circumstances."

"Soon," he answered, "did you not know that I was engaged?"

She looked at him with some surprise, for she did not know how much of this to believe. His manner toward her, had certainly been that of an earnest lover for some time. His quizzical smile and tender manner as their eyes met, convinced her that this was only one of his indirect ways of surprising her secret; for in spite of caution she had learned to love him.

The inevitable Church Social soon rolled around; and this time it was to be an unusual occasion, as the entire congregation were invited to the pastor's hospitable home. The host went about welcoming all, and making each one feel at home, until he came to a group, of which Miss Wayland and Mr. Churchill were central figures.

"Good evening, Mr. Churchill," he said, "I am anticipating a handsome wedding fee very soon, over your way."

"We might attend to that little matter now," was the reply, "come Miss Wayland, what do you say?"

"That you are trifling," she said, with a scarcely perceptible frown.

With ready deference, he immediately said in a low tone, "I sincerely beg your pardon," and made himself so agreeable during the remainder of the evening, that when he had taken Miss Wayland home in his own carriage, it was difficult to say the inevitable "Good night."

As Miss Wayland laid her head on the pillow that night, she acknowledged to herself, that her heart had gone out of her own keeping.

When she returned from business next day, Mrs. Morgan laughingly said, "what do you think of the latest news?"

"Haven't even heard it," said Margaret, "does it concern me?"

"Of course it does," she replied, "and it runs thus, Mr. Churchill is so infatuated with Miss Wayland, that he no longer realizes the existence of another lady—the other lady being, presumably, Miss Annie Dunning, who is broken-hearted over it. She retires to her room immediately on her return from school, and refuses to see her friends."

"That is interesting, certainly, but I have never heard her name associated with Mr. Churchill's before. I thought he was supposed to be a sort of roving planet, having no bright, particular star."

"It has been so considered," replied Mrs. M——, "but it transpires now, that before you came upon the scene, he had been visiting her quietly at home, her numerous admirers having abandoned the field to this formidable rival."

Miss Annie Dunning was the only daughter of a worthy mechanic, who had educated herself through her own efforts, and held a high position as teacher in the High School of the City. She was universally beloved; of an amiable temperament, quiet, pleasant, wholly undemonstrative, with irresistibly charming manners; an altogether lovely girl. Being identified with another church circle, she and Miss Wayland seldom met. Church society was the society in Putnam, each denomination constituting a charmed circle of its own.

For a few days following this astonishing rumor, Miss Wayland observed that Miss Dunning passed the store going to and from school closely veiled; and when they met in the street, Miss Dunning declined to recognize Miss Wayland. A few heavy days passed, then Mr. Churchill presented himself at Mrs. Morgan's to spend the evening.

Miss Wayland was the only occupant of the parlor.

Just what she ought to do she did not know, but her manner was unmistakable,—she was not the young lady whose voice and eyes had said as plainly as words can speak, in response to the silent questioning of his own, “I love you.” Some inexplicable distance was between them, and a thrill of apprehension was plainly visible as he passed the chair she offered him, taking one which brought him nearer her. For the first time, as by an irresistible impulse, he spoke her name.

“Margaret, what incomprehensible thing has happened, that you should meet me like this?”

“Mr. Churchill,” she said, “it is better that you and I understand each other. The report comes to me as having general credence through the town, that you are engaged to Miss Dunning, and that I have been the means of estranging you, that Miss Dunning is broken-hearted, and refuses to admit her nearest friends. She passes my store veiled and refuses to speak when we meet. Now what have I done to her? God knows that I would not knowingly wrong her. I did not know that she had any claim on you. I have never sought your society, or solicited your attention; while I do not deny that I have enjoyed both; but know this, I do not propose encroaching upon the rights of any other lady.”

While Mr. Churchill was struck with surprise, he still could not help admiring the straight-forward declaration of rights, and the steady rectitude which prompted its expression. There was both sorrow and kindness in his voice, when he replied :

“There is no young lady of my acquaintance, whom I hold more highly in my esteem than Miss Dunning, and I should deeply regret causing her one moment’s pain, but I have never had a thought of marrying her. She has not the least claim upon me, save as a friend.”

With this unequivocal denial, Miss Wayland's usual manner returned and the remainder of the evening passed happily and pleasantly. Why she should be so unaccountably happy in this man's society was beyond her comprehension.

This feeling for him seemed to be revolutionizing her whole life. Her early disappointments and trials had left an impression of sadness on her features, but happiness was fast erasing these marks of care.

Miss Dunning's personal friends were very much aroused in her interest; among these was a Miss Bridgeman, who was also a teacher in Putnam. The Bridgemans were the oldest and most prominent family in the State, but this particular member of the family was much given to plain speaking.

Miss Wayland came in one evening, saying to Mrs. Morgan, "One would think that I had committed a crime by the way people are talking to me."

"What about?" said Mrs. Morgan.

"O, about Mr. Churchill; I have just called upon Miss Bridgeman; she is greatly disturbed about Miss Dunning and attacked me without mercy, she said: 'I know O. S. Churchill is going to be married, and I know the bride will be either you or Miss Dunning, or Miss Ainsworth, and he cannot deny that there is, or has been, an engagement with Miss Dunning.'"

"I know nothing about that," I replied, "but he certainly has manliness enough to know which one of the three he prefers. As for me I have never had an offer of marriage in my life, I never thought it would flatter my vanity in the least, to receive one, which I could not accept, if I could avoid it."

"Why, Miss Wayland, said she, I have always

thought that you looked like a person who had been disappointed in love."

"I have," I replied, "but it happened to be love of books, and not men; I am sure no woman could suffer more from the last, than I from the first."

"Now, Mrs. Morgan, what do you think of that? What business had she to speak to me about it at all? She seemed to carry the idea that I was greatly to blame if the gentleman looked at me."

"Remember, my dear," said her friend, "that Miss Dunning is her friend, she feels with and for her; Miss Bridgeman is a noble woman, although she may sometimes err in judgment."

Mr. Churchill continued to call upon Miss Wayland, to take her out for drives, and in no wise discontinued his attentions, but his whole manner seemed changed. He seemed to be seriously deliberating some weighty question; at last he said:

"Miss Wayland, I formed the resolution to marry my first wife, if I could, the first time I beheld her face; this was also true of the second—a cousin of mine was addressing her at the time, and I distanced him in the race, for which he has never forgiven me, but 'All is fair in love and war,' you know."

"I have never had a thought of marrying again, until I met you. My acquaintance with you has made me dissatisfied with my lonely life. I have known Miss Dunning for two years, and for a few months have visited her at her father's house. It has been understood between us that these were merely friendly visits (at least I have so understood it) but the gossips will have it otherwise, and her conduct sustains them in their opinion. Do you think I ought to marry her, if she has been so self-deceived in my intentions. I have been strictly honorable in all my inter-

course with her, and, if she loves me—mind I don't say that she does—I do not know my duty in the case. Tell me what you think about it."

Margaret reasoned with herself, "If I tell him that I think it a sin for two to marry for any consideration except reciprocal love, he will think I am pleading for myself," so she replied:

"I think that depends upon what you call strictly honorable, and what course you have taken to win her love."

"I have never tried at all, I pledge you my word," he said, "and of late I have dreamed of something dearer, sweeter,—but I have always been honorable in all my dealings," he added thoughtfully.

These were days of temptation to Margaret, which would have been still heavier to bear had she understood herself aright. She thought wearily, "He loves me, and he does not love her, I have only to speak and my happiness is secured,—ah, not so,—for another whose claims antedate mine would suffer. O, why did I ever know this?"

"I wish I knew whether it was his wealth that attracted her, or does she love him unselfishly as I do. I want to trust his word, but I cannot help thinking that he feels bound to her in some way."

The longer her thoughts dwelt upon this subject, the more determined she became to sacrifice self on the altar of right.

"My character," thought she, "ought to be symmetrical enough to survive the trial without shipwreck; can I be sure that her's is? If there is one man so much to me, there must be plenty more in this great world," she reasoned.

Poor deluded girl. How could she know any better when the home and church allow children to grow up as ignorant as the birds, regarding the most important laws of

their being, or with theories so false as to be more detrimental to future happiness than ignorance.

The sad reproachful face of broken-hearted Miss Dunning seemed to haunt her, and she felt that no happiness could come to her at the cost of so much sorrow for another.

And so the struggle went on for weeks, the longing to grasp this happiness which seemed within her reach, and the doubt whether after all, it might not prove,

"Like Dead Sea fruits that tempt the eye
But turn to ashes on the lips."

if she sacrificed conscience and another's peace to win it.

Mr. Churchill was evidently in much the same state of mind.

One evening not long after their last meeting, Margaret received a note asking for the pleasure of one more drive in her "sweet company." She consented to go, but felt as though she could hear the nails being driven in her coffin lid, for she was certain that matters were approaching a crisis. Men do not often become extremely conscientious; but when they do, they are very likely to see only one side of a question, and act accordingly; regardless of the cruel stabs by which their backward steps may be traced.

Some officious friend had told him that he owed reparation to Miss Dunning, for having unintentionally won her affections, but no one had reminded him that he was committing a worse sin, in casting aside this heart which he had intentionally made his own.

Mr. Churchill's mood was a grave and serious one this evening, and he soon, but with evident hesitancy, introduced the subject, so prominent in the hearts of both.

"Margaret, Miss Wayland," he said, "what must I do? I have struggled with myself for the last four weeks, to find some theory, which would at least satisfy my own conscience,

that would permit me to follow the dictates of my heart, and settle this question of marriage in my own way. I have without doubt, inadvertently, believe me, given Miss Dunning reason to think that I cared for her, and she relying on that, has given me her love. I have made careful inquiry and am convinced that her disappointment would be serious. She is a lovely girl, but God knows, she has honored me with a love which I cannot return as I ought. Is it my duty to try to make her life happy?"

Margaret's heart beat almost to suffocation, as his troubled eyes sought her face.

"He will marry her to prevent breaking her heart," she thought. "I wonder if he would still be of the same mind if he thought mine would break if he did marry her. He could then choose his victim," she continued grimly, "but I will never die for love."

His voice was still in her ears saying: "I have argued the matter with myself, and think that the path of duty is plain, too plain."

"He is trying to do right, what he believes to be right; shall I stand in the way of his sense of duty? No, I cannot. Be still, rebellious heart. I cannot fail now."

"Believe me, Miss Wayland," he continued, "but for this obstacle, I should long before this have sought your hand in marriage, if I could have satisfied myself that I had any chance of acceptance."

A painful heart-throb sent the blood in warm waves to the face on which his eyes rested, and a quick, involuntary upward glance, revealed all he wished to know. It was a cruel test, and the reaction paled her cheek, while she collected all her fortitude for the decisive answer which she must give.

When he saw what he had done, he turned toward her instantly, and with trembling tones exclaimed:

"Margaret, my—dear girl, don't look so reproachfully at me; that I think would kill me outright."

Margaret turned toward him, and looking steadily past him, for she dared not meet his eye, lest she should lose her self-control said:

"I appreciate all the worth you have evinced this evening, and I sincerely hope you will have all the happiness you deserve in this discharge of duty. I should feel greatly pained if your acquaintance with me proved to be a bar to your future happiness."

"Then you think I ought to marry this lady, Miss Wayland?" he said, surprised at the calm indifference of her voice.

"Certainly, as you seem to have reached that conclusion," she answered with a smile.

He thought, "I wonder if I have been mistaken after all, and I have been the victim of this flirtation instead of the young lady."

He only said: "Miss Wayland, I have made you my confidant in a very delicate matter, I am sure your own good sense will see the propriety of keeping that confidence sacred.

"I do not discuss my own affairs," said she, and I certainly would not betray my friend's."

A day or two after this, Mrs. Morgan said with an amused smile:

"O. S. Churchill is either very unhappy because he is going to marry you, or else because he is not. He passes by with a drooping head, and a face, the gravity of which is unprecedented in the Churchill family."

Margaret only smiled in answer, and her friend thought, "It's all right between them, but what does his unusual aspect mean?"

Less than a week from the final interview of Mr. Churchill

and Margaret, the latter exclaimed gaily upon entering the breakfast room one morning: "Mr. Churchill and Miss Dunning were married at 8 o'clock last evening, at the residence of the bride's father; the newly wedded pair went immediately to the home of the bridegroom. No guests. No cards."

"And your hair did not turn white in a single night either," replied Mrs. Morgan in quick response to her merry announcement, but she thought, "I believe she loved him after all."

From this moment this true friend kept loving watch of Margaret; and she saw with pain, that the brave struggle which she made against fate, was telling on her in many ways.

Many were the attempts among their mutual acquaintances to surprise Margaret's secret from her, but her assumed indifference was so much like the real thing that all their efforts were futile.

A few week's after Mr. Churchill's marriage, he was the subject of discussion at a dinner party, Margaret being present. One gentleman said to another:

"O. S. Churchill owns 500 acres of pine lands."

"Yes, I suppose he is wealthy," answered his friend. "He owns the greater part of the stock in the Rome road, and has valuable interests in Lower California."

The hostess over-hearing this conversation remarked laughingly to Margaret: "Just think, Miss Wayland, all that might have been yours if you had married him."

"But," said Margaret, "that is not half so important a consideration as that a man be a fortune in himself."

"But he is," said the hostess.

"I always thought so," was Margaret's reply, "but I have occasionally met a person who differed with me on that point."

At that time a tragedy occurred in the home of Mrs.

Morgan. Her dearly loved husband was snatched from her side by an occurrence so unforeseen that the shock utterly prostrated her.

Mr. Morgan was rapidly driving toward home, one day, in the face of a driving storm, when with a vivid flash the lightning shivered a tree, near which he was driving, to splinters. The horse gave a sudden plunge forward, falling on his knees. Mr. Morgan, half stunned by the shock, was thrown in front of the carriage; and when the horse recovered himself with a spring, the sudden reverse movement seemed to nearly dislocate his neck. He reached home, however, apparently not much worse for his adventure; and fearing to alarm his wife, forbore mentioning the circumstance to her, but confided to a mutual friend the fact that he was suffering from a constant fear of paralysis.

This nervous condition was so palpable, that Mrs. Morgan insisted upon his consulting a physician, but he protested that he was not ill, only slightly indisposed, and wanting nothing but his wife's society to make him all right again. The tender, loving confidences of those days of what he called rest, were very sweet to the affectionate wife in after days.

One afternoon, he seemed to take great pleasure in reviewing their happy life together, and expressing his unflinching love and trust.

After a somewhat restless night, the morning found him unable to rise, and before the day was past, all hope was over; and Mrs. Morgan, frantic with grief, was clinging to the dear hand, and calling the beloved name, but receiving no response; for the soul, deaf to the voice of love, was loosing its moorings here, to float out on the vast sea of eternity.

When all was over, his wife was removed from his bedside in an unconscious condition; ministered to by the friends who had gathered around her in her hour of trial.

Then it was, that her "bread cast upon the waters" began to return to her, for those whom she had benefited, vied with each other to show her kindness.

Margaret took her place in the afflicted home, as a kind sister might have done, shielding Mrs. Morgan lovingly from all the cares and annoyance of the household, looking after the servants, and the thousand and one things, which need a guiding hand at such a time.

Not long after Mr. Morgan's death, it was deemed advisable by Mrs. Morgan's friends, that she should break up her home; this left Margaret once more dependent on a boarding house home. All the summer passed, and the trouble that was preying upon Margaret's life made its appearance in an approaching illness. A physician was called. "Doctor," said Margaret, "I cannot be ill, you must prevent it."

"I will certainly try," he answered, "but the first and most important prescription will be, to stop work,—rest for body and brain."

"I cannot, it is impossible," she replied.

For ten days and nights she suffered with a consuming fever, still protesting, "I am not ill, I will not give up," but the inevitable end came. Unable to rise, or take charge of her own medicine, she yielded at last. Her brother Alfred was summoned from New York, to assist in caring for her. Her disease was pronounced Typhoid fever, and for twenty-eight days, she lay in a semi-conscious dream-like state, but was spared the mortification of giving her secret thoughts to the world in delirium. In the beginning of her illness, she had struggled fiercely to hold control of her reason, and her speech, and God had graciously answered her unspoken prayers.

Recovery was a slow process, rendered unusually so by

her insistence on returning to business before she had fully gained her strength.

When she was again able to mingle with the world, she seemed like a changed being. All her wealth of bronze hair had disappeared, and in the short new curls around her forehead, were many threads of silver. Nor was this all, there had been a revolution in mind and heart. She looked with different eyes, upon all the incidents of her acquaintance with O. S. Churchill, and found that her heart was still in her own keeping after all.

The change in him was apparent to all; he no longer attended church with his family; he was seen in society no more; all his bouyancy of spirits had departed.

Miss Wayland said to herself: "If marriage can so quickly transform a fascinating lover, into a dull unattractive husband, the whole matrimonial scheme is a fraud, and single blessedness a thousand times more desirable."

CHAPTER V.

TEMPERANCE IN THE WEST.

When the great "Red Ribbon" temperance wave swept over Michigan, Miss Wayland was carried along with it; and through great discouragements applied her indomitable will to the purpose of acquiring platform oratory; and then, with a courage and perseverance which were well nigh marvelous, she did effective work for the temperance cause in that state for more than two years. In the meantime her family had removed to North-Western Nebraska.

Miss Wayland's friend, Mrs. Morgan, had removed to an Eastern city, and after a long silence, had written to obtain some information of Margaret's whereabouts; after some traveling about, this letter reached its proper destination and Margaret in her answer gives this account of her Western work.

"I arranged my lectures through correspondence with the postmasters along the way, and made my first trip in March, 1880; wholly with a view to visiting my family, whose going west I had bitterly opposed. I expected to find much amusement on the trip, from the rude habits, and manners of these frontier people, and a large fund of material with which to entertain my Michigan friends when I returned, but in this I was pleasantly undeceived.

The unbounded courtesy extended to me everywhere, even by the liquor selling and drinking classes; the invariable kindness of the press; the true frontier hospitality with which the people everywhere welcomed me; and above all the wonderful manner in which God seemed to bless my

efforts, made every inch of my trip a fascination to me. It was with deep regret that I left this interesting field to fill Michigan engagements; but I promised myself a speedy return.

The Michigan work was pressing and it seemed impossible to leave it. I had received the credentials of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, for frontier work, but the Michigan leaders would not consent to my leaving. A sad Providence seemed to aid my return. My mother was stricken with a sudden and alarming illness. I began to make preparations for going to her, but she was buried before I could get my leave.

I had only begun my work again, when the startling news reached me of the sudden death by drowning, of a dearly loved brother. Half frantic with grief I started for my father's home. Our train was blockaded by snow, at a station in Nebraska, for two days. I had in the meantime learned that my brother's remains were taken through, one day in advance of the train on which I was a passenger.

I reached home at last, worn out with fatigue, and sorrow.

The heavy fall of snow kept me a prisoner for seven weeks. Four weeks of this time, the settlement was without flour, having to grind their corn and wheat as best they could, using a large coffee mill which belonged to one of the settlers, and which was kept for the purpose of grinding feed.

Just before the winter broke up, I began my temperance work on the frontier. In prosecution of this object I penetrated the Black Hills, and made my way into every corner of this field of work.

After two years of arduous service, I decided to take advantage of the course of reading, which I had taken with

my brother, and make an application for admittance to the Bar. I did so, and was admitted.

I settled in Deguerre. The district court—a superior court and court of record—convened soon after my admission. I was sitting in court, and with great surprise saw two women brought in and arraigned for selling liquor without a license. One of them plead “guilty” and paid her fine; the other “not guilty” and asked for counsel.

The presiding Judge who happened to be the Chief Justice sent a bailiff to me, to ask if I was willing to be assigned to the case.

“Who is the party?” I asked. “She is a girl from the dance house,” he hesitatingly replied.

After a moment’s thought I consented to be assigned as counsel in the case. She was my first client, and I made an appointment to meet her at my office the next morning at 10 o’clock.

The consternation of this frontier town knew no bounds. “Miss Wayland, the popular temperance lecturer, and President of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, to defend such a woman for selling liquor without a license, it cannot be possible,” said one to another. “It is true,” was the reply, “and only pardonable because she defends an erring woman.” “She ought to resign her presidency,” said the first speaker.

I went my way as composedly as though it was an engagement to address a temperance meeting.

At the hour appointed the accused girl appeared at my office. I gave her a chair and taking one beside her, said: “Child, what tempted you into the life you lead?” Amy, (for that was the name she gave) hung her head and said, “I don’t know.” “Have you no parents?” I asked. “No, they died when I was a baby and I come up,” she answered

sadly, while the tears dropped silently on her shawl. "Tell me all about it, Amy," I said kindly.

She seemed to gain courage as she recognized the voice of kindness, and in a trembling voice between set teeth, she said, "I loved him, he promised to marry me, then cast me off. It made a devil of me, that is the whole story."

Miss Wayland looked at the flushed face and set lips, while she thought, "A broken heart makes a lawyer and politician of one girl, and a dance house frequenter of another, one faces the world, the other defies it," and she added aloud, "I wish it had made something better of you, would you not like to earn a living in some better way?" "Yes, if I only could," she replied, a softer expression taking the place of the old hard look.

The court room was densely packed during the hearing of this case with all classes of people, from the highly respectable to the lower grades, all anxious to hear what could be said by a lady attorney in a case like this.

Public sympathy was with me and my cause; as it always is with a woman who attempts to do a kind act, on the frontier. This sentiment was so strong that I could feel it. The jury were out two hours and when they returned, their verdict was "Not guilty."

The Judge said to me as we left the court room: "You must tell your client not to do so any more, Miss Wayland."

"I will see to that," I answered gravely, and earnestly; and right here I will say that I did not lose sight of my client until she was in good hands, and earning an honest living.

The temperance people, those who were too bigoted to take the erring by the hand, and who believed in fine-spun theories, began a system of persecution which was very hard to bear. Some were charitable enough to write for

information, not wishing to condemn me without a hearing, and always received a kind reply. The press of the frontier, almost without exception, sustained me in my position.

One morning when the excitement was nearly over, the "Daily Expounder" came out with the following:

OUR MARGARET.

SHE REPLIES TO DETROIT NEWSPAPER STRICTURES.

DEGUERRE, D. T., June 10.

To the Editor of The Daily Expounder:

"Several years ago Miss Margaret Wayland was a quiet but successful merchant at Putnam, Mich. Then her soul was fired in the temperance cause; and she became one of the most effectual gospel temperance workers in Michigan and as such was favorably known throughout the entire state. Two or three years ago she went to Deguerre where she likewise became famed in the anti-beer and anti-whiskey cause, becoming president of the State W. C. T. U., if indeed she was not its originator. Less than a year ago she was admitted to the bar, being the first lady in that locality to enjoy that high distinction. A short time ago she had her first case in court, and stranger than fiction, it was in defense of a woman on trial for selling liquor without a license, and she won her case. Has Miss Wayland changed her temperance convictions, or, being a lawyer, does she feel at liberty to take care of her client whatever befall the interests of suffering humanity.—*Detroit Evening Light*.

The above appeared as quoted in the Light; and I sent a reply but they chose to simply publish a synopsis; will the Expounder please make room for the reply in its entirety, for the sake of those temperance people who may think, as I once did, that it is very despicable for an attorney to defend a liquor case:—

THE REPLY.

Your article closes with two questions, first, "Has Miss Wayland changed her temperance convictions?" "I answer unqualifiedly 'No.'"

Query No. 2. "Being a lawyer does she feel at liberty to take care of her client whatever befalls the interests of fallen humanity?"

I would say, first, that I was assigned to the case by the court, not without my permission, however. Our Deguerre laws make it the duty of an attorney to defend the defenceless regardless of remuneration. Then there is a general principal of law or of civilized life that accords to every accused person a defence, if for no other purpose than to avoid undue punishment if found guilty. There is another general law that assumes every person innocent till proven guilty. I have been told both before, and since this trial that the girl did not keep liquor in her house to sell. I was told this by the class to which she belonged, by saloon people and others.

Outside the legal duties of an attorney, I should defend all the liquor cases that come to me, if for no other reason than to convince the license temperance people, that no license law can chain the evil of intemperance,—only abolition of the traffic.

The fact that she was a woman was the best possible reason why I, a woman too, should defend her, and the highest reason why I should defend her was the fact of her being the sort of a woman she was, with every door shut against a return to a better life. I presumed the history to be the same as all of her class that I have encountered in my reform work. Upon questioning her I found this to be true. Disappointed love had ruined her life, and in her desire for revenge on a faithless race, she had taken the one false step which forever blasted her fame. As she talked with me through her blinding tears, of some way out of the life she led, I thought:

“Man tarnishes his character and brightens it again;
But if woman chance to swerve from the strictest path of virtue,
One false step forever blasts her fame.
In vain with tears the loss she does deplore;
She sinks like stars that fall to rise no more!”

My memory went back to a day at Putnam when I had taken into my store such a girl, motherless, who was tired of husks. Every woman who came into the store that day, raised their hands in holy horror and exclaimed, “What, that girl here!” At night with an aching heart I had to send her away. Society shuts its doors against the ruined girl, but receives with open arms the man who caused her ruin.

There is but one solution to this inconsistency. After death comes the judgment.

MARGARET WAYLAND.

Two new objects soon came under Miss Wayland's observation; into which she threw herself with her

accustomed impetuosity, and devotion to the cause of education and patriotism. One of these was the establishment of a Presbyterian University at Deguerre, the other the claims of the frontier territories to admission as states.

In pursuance of the first she made a tour of the Eastern states presenting the claims of this western project to the prosperous Presbyterians of the East. At Albany, New York, she called upon the Governor, the fame of his great-hearted generosity having reached her on her way. She had no cards but professional ones, and was obliged to state her mission before she could gain an audience with the busy Governor of the Empire State. She had not long to wait for an interview.

"I have come," said she, "to appeal to the generosity of the prosperous, cultured Eastern Presbyterians, in behalf of the educational interests of the far away frontier. Believe me it is not a sectarian institution which we desire; but an educational one, where the sons and daughters of the great west can receive the benefits of Christian culture."

"Walk in the office and we will talk it over," said the Governor in reply.

In a few words she gave the history of the enterprise, and all that they hoped and wished to accomplish, by the help of their Eastern friends.

The Governor had been watching her closely during this recital and suddenly said: "Why do you do this? why do you not let some man take up this tremendous burden?"

She replied: "there are some things which have to be done in this world, which a woman can do much better than a man, and this is one of them. I don't know where a man could be found to do the work I am doing."

"I have many calls of this kind, Miss Wayland. I have to systematize my giving as you may suppose, but I will gladly contribute to your enterprise;" and the Governor

who had never been known to send away empty handed the agent of any worthy cause, made the desired contribution. As he handed it to her he said:—

“And so you go into court and plead with juries,” while a compassionate smile crossed his lips.

“I have a few times,” she replied, with drooping eyelids, not that she was ashamed of her profession, but she felt the tacit reproof in his voice.

How little men can understand a woman's nature after all. This grand, good man believed in womanly women, and looked with infinite compassion, if not disapproval, on all work outside of the so-called woman's sphere; and could not conceive how intolerable such a life might become to an ambitious, but lonely, desolate heart.

Margaret left his presence, feeling that she had met a great and rising man.

The kindliness of his voice when he spoke of her personal life, made her feel for an instant, as though her uncle Hayden Buffington, had come back to earth. She felt that his tone expressed a personal sympathy. She had noticed this in Western people, but seldom in the East.

“He had all the culture, refinement, and dignity of the East, combined with the friendliness of the West,” she afterward said of him, and continued, “he is large hearted enough to take the whole world into his regard, and is certainly far superior to the age in which he lives.”

It was impossible to banish from her mind the impression that in some way her interview with this man would give a new direction to her life work.

Miss Wayland's objective point was New York City which she reached just after the Wall Street panic of 1883. The whole business part of the city was in a state of suppressed excitement. Of course it was impossible to approach business men with her appeal for help, and while waiting

developements, she was suddenly taken very ill; discouraged and disheartened she began to think of returning with her mission unaccomplished, when like a voice from the silence came this mandate, "Go to Washington."

"Why not?" she said to herself, "politicians are always accessible, and open-hearted."

As soon as she was sufficiently recovered to travel, she went to the Capital City. She had been there but a few days, when the cards of two gentlemen were sent to her room, and descending to the hotel parlor, she met Warren Sharpley and Col. Cowley. The latter gentleman was the husband of one of her most dearly loved frontier friends.

Smilingly greeting her guests, she said: "This is indeed a pleasant surprise."

As she spoke, a meaning look passed between the two gentlemen, and Col. Cowley in his most insinuating manner, explained that they had seen the notice of her arrival in the papers, and confessed to great curiosity as to her mission here.

"I am here for the sole purpose of soliciting funds for the University," said Miss Wayland.

"We feared that you were here in some political interest" replied the Col.

"Indeed, sir, I am not;" she said with some spirit, "My personal pledge is given to raise \$11,000 for the University, and that pledge is counted on as so much cash in hand. This business occupies all my time and thoughts; and I could give no attention to politics even if I desired to do so."

Seeing a look of incredulity upon their faces, she even related her experience in New York as an explanation for her presence in Washington, on such a mission.

It was with much difficulty that Margaret retained her composure; she felt that these gentlemen had no right to

question her so closely and this feeling was fast arousing a burning indignation which the subject of conversation seemed to warrant, when one of the gentlemen made some allusion to Hezekiah G. Brass, a prominent frontier official whose conduct in his public position had been such as to provoke general disapprobation. Col. Cowley's relations with him had been of such a nature as to involve him more or less in the denunciations which were dealt out with no unsparing hand on Mr. Brass.

Col. Cowley addressed Margaret in a manner to elicit her opinion of the man; to which she replied:

"I have no respect for H. G. Brass, he has forfeited the good opinion of all right-minded people, by his venial and disgraceful conduct in the office which he holds."

"But, Miss Wayland" said Mr. Sharpley, "do you not know that you cannot condemn H. G. Brass without injustice to Col. Cowley?"

"It may be so" said Margaret, "but Col. Cowley knows that I would do anything in my power to advance his interests, or secure him any position; and chiefly as a compensation for the wrong he has sustained at the hands of H. G. Brass."

"What can you mean, Miss Wayland?" ejaculated the astonished Colonel.

"Has he not destroyed forever the confidence which the people once reposed in you?" she replied.

"I trust you are misinformed," said he, and with marked displeasure added, "It will not pay you, Miss Wayland, to repeat your opinion here."

"It is not a question of financial importance to me, sir," answered Margaret, "but if my 'opinion' is solicited I shall undoubtedly give it; indeed, have already done so. Senator B. asked me to-day some questions about Mr. Brass

which I truthfully answered ; but I am not here either in the interest of Mr. Brass, or his opponents."

As the gentlemen arose to take their departure, Col. Cowley said with a look of meaning:

"Your missionary work is all very well, but you would better leave H. G. Brass alone."

Miss Wayland looked after these men as they left the room, with a curious smile on her lips, and then said to herself:

"Well, it seems I am of consequence enough to be feared by these political wire-pullers. Is it possible that because I have chosen a profession, I am classed with politicians and lobbyists? What does it all mean? I think I see it—H. G. Brass wants a re-appointment; the Senate must confirm him. These men doubtless think that he could meet the opposition of men, with the argument that they were ambitious politicians who sought to destroy him, to advance their own personal interests; but this woman under pretence of missionary work, would be his ruin, if she persisted in "answering truthfully" any questions which might be asked her."

She was right, they did fear her; and with a vindictiveness as cruel as it was uncalled for, tried to injure her character and credit in every way possible; but their plot was exposed and failed of its purpose; recoiling on its perpetrators.

Miss Wayland had fortunately been able to secure the aid and protection of Senator Milton and his noble wife, and this went far toward refuting the charges of her enemies.

When she realized the full purport of the situation, she felt that a wise Providence must have guided her steps to Washington; for she had learned that no good name was sacred from the baseness of political intriguers; and she then and there formed the resolution to expose as publicly

their villianous schemes, as it was possible for one woman to do.

Having completed her work in Washington she returned to New York, and made a tour of the state, to hear the reforms instituted by the new Governor, the theme of every tongue.

"There is a man with whom the interests of the Nation would be safe," she said ; and the impression grew stronger day by day that God had a political mission for her.

The burden for obtaining the money for the University, weighed heavily upon her, and she prayed earnestly to be relieved from this work.

She visited at last, the man through whose generosity she hoped to accomplish all she had set out to do, but found him powerless to aid her. He said, "never mind, take what you have to the General Assembly now in session at Saratoga, and I think they will relieve you ; we will contribute money enough to pay your expenses there."

She immediately proceeded to Saratoga, where she met the Deguerre University committee, who informed her that she had been officially released from her obligation.

This left her at liberty to take up other work, and with her new insight into politics, and her strong convictions of the fitness of her candidate for the presidential chair, she determined to devote herself to the object of securing his election.

She traveled from city to city interviewing members of the press whom she knew through her public work, advocating the nomination of the Reform Governor, of the Empire State. She visited one editor of an Independent Penny Daily, and he laughingly said :

"They are going to 'set up a job' on your candidate's private character, based on his bachelor life."

"That would be logical, indeed," she replied.

When she first interviewed the editor of a leading Democratic paper, which opened its editorial columns to her pen, the candidate for whom she was working was their third choice, but before the convention he became first; and the State Convention was solid for him.

At this point she asked, "How can I secure a ticket to the National Convention?" The member of the press, whom she addressed, said:

"I know Ralph Winston of Marianna very well, he is a delegate, and I will see that he provides you with a ticket."

Satisfied with this promise she went on with her work, taking a course to make friends for her candidate which was as unique as it was telling. Having traveled through the South in her temperance work, she had formed many acquaintances among prominent people, and sent letters to Vice-Presidents of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union throughout that section of the country, making a statement of the facts as she understood them, and soliciting influence and support for her candidate. Letters like the following could not fail of making an impression on the people of the South.

AUSTIN, ILL., June 9, 1884.

Dear Sister Co-worker:

I write you this letter, not because I suppose you would have anything to do with partisan politics, (knowing the conservatism of the South in regard to women), but I feel assured that you will place this letter for me in the hands of some gentleman who is a representative, reliable Democrat.

I have spent the winter in the East soliciting funds for the Presbyterian University of Deguerre, and while canvassing in Washington became satisfied that a change of administration was greatly to be desired.

There is a feeling among good people North that it is time the South had a chance to show her hand. This can only be accomplished by electing as the next President a good Northern Democrat, who will give the official patronage of the South to the Democratic party, which constitutes the Christian intelligence of the South, as the Republican party always has of the North.

There is just one man in the party who could be elected, and have courage enough to take his seat,—the reform Governor of New York. If the South will endorse his claims in the Convention he can be nominated; and if nominated, will surely be elected.

There is no available Western man, and the time has not yet come when a Southern man could be elected, as it would make a sectional campaign and bring sure defeat.

I am free to work night and day till after election to this end, in the North or South, wherever I can work most effectively. I have spoken as many as three times a day besides riding thirty miles in a carriage;—this was four years ago when my convictions were of a different nature, and I worked as hard to defeat the Democrats as I am now willing to do to secure their victory.

Then my Republican friends were alarmed for my personal safety. I have reached my present position through earnest thought, and strong convictions of justice and right.

I have just made a trip from Washington to Chicago via Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo and Cleveland. There is but one feeling in regard to the Governor of New York, and that is,—if nominated he will be elected. This feeling is shared not only by Democrats, but by independents of all parties, and all disaffected factions. The dissatisfaction with the Republican politicians is universal, even with the better element of the Republican party, and is shared by many of those holding federal positions.

If Gov. C. is nominated they will vote for him, or stay at home and not vote at all. No other public official has ever made such a record as he. He was elected Mayor of Buffalo to straighten out the affairs of the city, and it is to-day the best regulated city in the state.

He was elected Governor of the State for similar reasons, polling the independent Republican vote. He has shown that he could do the state's business as he would his own, on strictly business principles (what the tax-payers want in the White House). His business hours in the Executive Chamber are as regular as a bank cashier's. In the use of the veto power, he has shown himself appreciative of the interests of invested capital as well as of the laboring people. In everything he has shown himself conscientious. The State Legislature has made the best record ever made by a legislative body in a presidential election year; legislating in the interest of reform in municipal government, knowing that if frivolous or unjust legislation was passed that it would be vetoed in the Executive Chamber.

There are more points in the Governor's favor than any other man in the Democratic party. All of his official acts have been performed

with the honorable purpose of serving the people faithfully, with no thought or fear of political consequences to himself or his party; evidently thinking that the man serves party best who serves his country best.

The Republicans of New York have been uneasy for some time, lest no candidate could be found to carry their State against this rising man.

A prominent Republican editor in one of the large cities of the State of New York, said to me:

"Blaine cannot carry the State of New York against Gov. C——, Arthur cannot, and I doubt if Edmunds could.

The circular sent out from the Republican conference committee of New York to every delegate to the June Convention from that State, gives away the whole situation, with such points as the following: "Faction fights in the Republican party in this State very bitter." "The Republican machine obnoxious to a large portion if not a majority." "Any candidate likely to launch the country into a fantastic or adventurous policy dangerous." "The party cannot afford to burden itself with a defensive campaign."

"A change of one vote in each school district would wipe out a Republican majority as large as 1880." "Party allegiance as a controlling force no stronger than in 1882," etc.

These all mean fear of the Governor getting the Democratic nomination, and carrying New York in spite of everything. With 100,000 presidential offices to help the party in power; the party out of power must poll the independent vote if they expect to succeed. No one but the reform Governor can do this. He has been tried and not found wanting in any particular.

Those who have practiced going over to the enemy with him, and not found it unpleasant, would do it again with less shock, than in the case of any other candidate. Nothing could be said against his public record, even by political antagonists, in the heat of a campaign. His enemies are only afraid of his honesty. He is a statesman rather than a politician, with no love of politics for politics' sake, but only as a citizen's duty. He is not a candidate, and for that very reason the people should want him.

He would give such strength to the Democratic party by four years in the White House as no other man in America could. He is known in his own home city as a man of strong character, an effective lawyer, and a citizen who never shirked his duty. If nominated and elected he may be trusted to expose jobs, turn out and keep out thieves, and give the country a manly and conservative administration.

You can use any point herein contained through the press or other-

wise, without any public use of my name at present, or any intimation that you receive your information from a woman. That would be impolitic.

Your Sister Co-worker,

MARGARET WAYLAND.

P. S.—It is not known to Gov. C. that I am taking this active interest in the campaign.

Ratification meetings were being held everywhere after the nomination of the Democratic candidate, when a dastardly attack was made upon the private character of the nominee; the same article which was predicted by the editor of the Penny Press on the 28th of May.

It was a virulent, scurrilous assertion, and was immediately copied as by preconcerted arrangement in the Penny Press of every leading city of the North.

The next evening after this article made its appearance, Miss Wayland took the platform for the candidate whose nomination she had labored so hard to secure. In vain her friends protested that she knew nothing of its truth or falsity.

"I know," she said, "it is false, an outrage upon the manhood, and nobility of one whose every action is guided by a sense of duty and rectitude."

CHAPTER IV.

CAMPAIGN WORK.

The deadly enmity of the defeated party toward Miss Wayland exhibited itself in such petty persecutions, that it rendered impracticable any attempt to resume her practice in the city of her adoption; she therefore turned her face toward Washington.

Her first call was made on East Capital Street, at the house of her beautiful dark Spanish friend, Donna Inez.

There she recounted all her campaign experiences, to the delight of her hearers.

"With your busy days and nights how did you ever manage to get time for preparing your work?" said Inez.

"I just felt inspired for each day's speech, and never used the same notes, but cut out and added for each day's new developements."

"Does the feeling of opposition to women on the platform never embarrass you, Miss Wayland?"

"I have never suffered from that feeling in my own case but once, and that was when I abandoned business in Putnam, Michigan, for platform work. I could not address a Putnam audience without feeling that my own materialized business-self stood between them and me.

"I was the first lady who ever attended a State Democratic Convention in Michigan. I had no thought or knowledge of this until the gentleman who escorted me to a private box in the Opera House, said.

"You are the first lady on the ground this morning."

After I was seated I thought, "Well, the Republican papers will have something to talk about, if no other lady attends."

My next thought was, "you should never hesitate to stand alone in a good cause," and then the business of the day commencing, it passed entirely out of my mind.

At the second session several other ladies made their appearance.

I always make it a point to disarm prejudice some way where I know it exists. In the early days of lady clerks, a lady came into the store where I was the only lady clerk, and at that time the only one not engaged. The proprietor referred her to me, when she replied:

"I do not like to trade with a lady, I will wait for you."

I stepped quickly forward and said pleasantly, "I do not blame you, I have always felt that way myself; but if you will permit me to try, I think I can please you."

She immediately gave me her attention, ordering quite a large bill of goods, and always preferred my services to any of the other clerks in the store from that time.

So in addressing an audience on politics, I say:

"To those of my hearers who think a woman out of her sphere on the political platform, I have only to say that I most heartily sympathize with you; but when God chooses for his own purposes, to take a woman from the quiet walks of life, and put her in public work against her will, she is powerless to oppose Him, and should He take any lady present through the same experiences which have fallen to my lot, I am sure she would reverently bow in submission to His will.

I knew that where I made speeches in the last campaign, the prejudice was chiefly against women who were making Democratic speeches, and to meet that I, said:

"I have no apology to offer for standing before you as an independent supporter of the Democratic ticket. I have been a life-long Republican of the most bigoted type. Until my removal to the frontier, I had never dreamed that a Republican could do any political wrong, or a Democrat any political good.

For the last four years I have lived under the most outrageous Republican Executive ruler, with which a great and intelligent people have ever been afflicted, and every effort to remove him has proved fruitless.

I had occasion to visit the capital of the nation on a frontier missionary enterprise, when he conceived the idea that it would never do to permit a woman from his section of the country to present a missionary interest to United States Senators,—as he depended upon their votes for confirmation if re-nominated; and she might answer some questions about him, which would not redound to his credit.

He resorted to such unmanly methods to stop my work, that I, of necessity, felt compelled to investigate the ways of the party, which could sustain him in such a career.

I found to my consternation, that backing him was an organized ring, which controlled the Republican press of the Capital City, the Associate press, and in fact, was supposed to have great power over the Democratic press at this point. I am satisfied that the only difference between this organized gang of plunderers at the Capital, and the desperadoes of the frontier is, that the methods of the Washington ring would put to blush the codes of honor held among the Western outlaws.

I found also that net-working the whole country were local rings acting as auxiliaries to this, and that the offices of the government officials throughout the country were their headquarters. It seemed to me that all the pride I

had felt in my country and my country's capital, as school girl and woman, was fast departing; and that I could never again think of Washington as anything but a den of corruption, of which I was obliged to know the secrets."

This last was said with so much pathos that Inez remarked:

"You are too conscientious, intense, and tender-hearted to be a politician; you ought to be teaching an infant school."

"I have always thought so," she answered laughingly, "providing the pupils were my own personal property, but Providence seems to have ordained it otherwise."

"I suppose your zealous nature is what makes your work so effective."

"Perhaps so, at any rate, whatever I do, is conscientiously done."

"Well, what next did you say, Miss Wayland? I am getting interested to follow out your line of argument."

"I dissected the Republican nominee's letter of acceptance, section by section, and when I came to the hypocrisy and inconsistency, of promising to reserve the public lands for the actual settler after the best part of them had been given away, I said, "In the frontier sections which I have visited, there is a rich railroad running East and West, built by an immense land grant, where one square mile of land is given to the railroad and the other is reserved for the actual settler. For a distance of twenty miles each side of this railroad no settler can pre-empt an acre of land without paying \$2.50 per acre — double the price paid for government land elsewhere. The double price charged within this railroad limit is to pay for the land given to the railroad; and the swindle does not stop here. The railroad withholds its lands from patent, paying no taxes till the settlers' improvements, in the way of farm buildings, churches,

and school houses, increase the value to ten dollars per acre; when they take out a patent and sell; the people having paid all the expenses of improvement and the railroad monopoly reaping the benefit.

The letter of acceptance regrets the necessity of referring to the two sections of our common country; this I consider a piece of rank phariseeism, since the two sections have been maintained ever since the war, by the Republican party's inexcusable treatment of the South for partisan ends.

The South cherishes no hatred of the North because of the war; but it is the treatment they have received since, which has embittered them.

When the South surrendered at Appomatox, she gave up the issue of war and accepted its consequences. She thinks that if the prodigal son was worth sacrificing two million of men and two billions of money to reclaim, they might receive him without condemning him to eternal family ostracism because of his past record.

I have found everywhere among fair-minded men, a feeling that the South has been punished enough, and that it is now time to afford her an opportunity to prove her loyalty to our common country.

I then proceeded to the indictment of the Republican party in many counts; elaborating upon the robbing of the people through the patent monopolies; taking up the matter of farm machinery in its relation to the frontier settler. The consumer pays a royalty to a monopoly upon every little thing in the shape of labor-saving machinery. A farmer cannot even buy a husking pin without it.

I spoke of the multiplication of millionaires; of the bad effect of the centralization of wealth, illustrating it from my own observation. In my missionary work of the East, I found that the churches usually had one rich man; a sort of

patron saint who, whenever money was wanted for church purposes, would say, "I will contribute half, as soon as the rest of the church will raise the other half," and this man flatters himself that he is a philanthropist when he is only burdening the church with a heavy tax; the half assigned to them, being much more difficult to raise, for them, than the half which he has pledged, for him, because he insists upon the church being maintained in a style commensurate with his wealth and style of living and thus keeps the membership overburdened, and with little or nothing left for missionary purposes.

Another count in the indictment is the robber tariff, which is paid by the consumer into the hands of the monopolist.

One Republican manufacturer said to me: "I have always been a protectionist until now, but I have never understood the tariff matter until this campaign.

"If the tariff on lumber was divided between the consumer and manufacturer, and kept out importation it would be a fair thing, but it all goes into the pocket of the manufacturer at the expense of the consumer; I can see that it is not right."

I had no need after bringing forward these arguments, to sum up with, "Verily the country has become a government of monopolies, by monopolies, for monopolies."

When I made this speech I had at my right a life-size portrait of the Republican candidate, with the so-called tatoos around him, which had given him the name of the "tattooed statesman." I explained why he was the first public man ever so styled, his official record being as black as the India ink on a man's arm and just as ineffaceable.

The one called "Jingo" I acknowledged to be political buncombe, but the rest were genuine tatoo.

One was called "Distribution of the Surplus Revenue."

Its place is on the Republican nominee's magnetic brain. They tell us that he is an able statesman, the brainiest man in America, and that the Democratic nominee is a man of mediocre ability. You may hunt through the entire record of the latter, and not find a single instance of his having shown himself so wholly lacking in wisdom as to propose collecting taxes from the people for the pleasure of handing them back again.

The Saturday night before election, circulars were sent out by the Republicans, asking the ministers to help them in their work through the pulpits, the following Sunday.

Apropos of this, I spoke of what is called the "Vile Literature tatoo"—charging it upon the Republican nominee's black heart, for as a leader of the party he was responsible for establishing this literature, and of employing a minister of the gospel to superintend it at a daily compensation of \$10, with the promise of a lucrative foreign mission after the 4th of March; thus sending into America's homes more demoralization than twenty years of good home influence can eradicate. And now they ask the clergy to sully their sacred cloth on to-morrow's holy day, by aiding in this nefarious work. The party which is lost to even a sense of self-respect ought to forfeit the good will of all self-respecting women and men.

The Republicans had been so long accustomed to success that they could not comprehend the audacity of a woman who could arraign and make out a clear case against a prominent representative of their party.

To show you their state of feeling, I will tell you what they did. A minister in this town whose guest I had been when engaged in temperance work, insisted upon my speaking in his church on Sunday evening. I declined at first on the plea that I could do but one thing at a time and do it justice, and being absorbed in my political work it would be

difficult to return to the temperance question alone ; but I finally accepted the invitation, and at his request announced it at my own meeting.

The Republican leaders who were connected with the church, immediately interviewed their minister, and demanded a public cancellation of the engagement.

He sent the letter to me to explain the change, and invited me to hear him on the subject of temperance. I was not yet extinguished, however, and thinking this a free Republic, not a Republican Monarchy, I made a strike for liberty, telegraphing the whole correspondence to the leading Democratic paper of the State, thus placing the matter before the people, previous to the closing of the polls on election day. These meddlesome people were thoroughly worsted in this engagement, and indignantly denounced the minister for allowing church records to go out of his hands. We carried the election in that town, where it is only a few years since the Democrats held their meetings secretly, to prevent their being broken up by the opposite party.

"Well," said Inez, "you have told us what you said of the opposition candidate; now give us a synopsis of what you said to recommend your own choice."

On the left of the stage where I was speaking hung a life-size portrait of the man who had always made good his official motto:

"PUBLIC OFFICE, A PUBLIC TRUST."

Introducing him by name, I spoke at length of his official life. I said: "In my missionary work I stopped at twenty points in the Empire State, staying a week in Albany, and longer than that in Buffalo. I heard on all sides the highest encomiums of the Reform Governor. This praise was not confined to his own party ; men said to me :

"I did not vote for him, I do not know that I ever would, but I approve him in every use of his official power."

"I was the guest of one prominent Independent Republican who gave me a detailed history of the origin of the movement."

He said: "The baser elements had come to the front in the Republican party, and absolutely controlled all its machinery; we tried defeating these elements in the primary caucuses, to find ourselves defied and triumphed over at every turn until it was evident that the only hope for the State was to defeat the party at the polls, and the same was true of the Nation."

"In the home city of Gov. C. he was held in high estimation by all the people, as a man to whom duty was a daily watch-word; who held office as a serious and solemn responsibility; of great independence of character, and conscientious in the performance of every detail of his official work."

"His public career has been remarkable, and steadily upward from the first; and it depends upon the voters of this country whether it should this year reach its climax in the White House at Washington or not."

"He was first appointed assistant attorney in 1862, elected as Sheriff in 1870, as Mayor in 1881, and Governor in 1882."

"He was elected Mayor because he was an honest Sheriff;—Governor because he was an honest Mayor; and will be elected President, because he has been an honest Governor."

They say a great deal about the Republican nominee's experience, speaking of Gov. C. as "a great, handsome overgrown two-year-old." Will some one tell me what executive experience the Republican nominee has ever had? He has had none, while the whole public life of the Democratic nominee has been executive, with the highest endorsement of both parties.

His communication to the common council of Buffalo, while Mayor, in regard to the perils to which children were exposed, ought to commend him to every mother-heart in the land. This extract will be sufficient to illustrate its general tenor :

“The importance of caring for children who are uncared for by natural guardians, or who are unmindful of parental restraint, is apparent to all.

“In the future, for good or evil, this influence will be felt in the community; and certainly the attempt to prevent their swelling the criminal classes is worth an effort. It seems to me that no pretext should be permitted to excuse allowing young girls to be on the streets at improper hours, since the result must necessarily be their destruction.”

In summing up the reasons “why we should win,” I claimed that the Boston Herald, Springfield Republican, New York Times, and Harper’s Weekly, had turned states evidence; that 85,320 enrolled Independents had come over to our side, who expect to poll a large conservative vote not enrolled.

Our foreign residents are convinced that the Republican party continued in power means monarchical government. They came to this country to escape that form of government, hence they will cast their vote with us.

In closing I said, “What is every vote cast for the Republican nominee, a vote for? In the language of another, it is for the man who has voted for, or failed to oppose, every subsidy of land or money asked for while he was in Congress.

“It is a vote for the man who voted for the audacious robbery, by which the government lien for its sixty-four millions advanced to the Pacific railroads, was changed from a first to a second mortgage; a man who was a lobbyist before he entered Congress, seeking contracts for the supply

of arms. As Speaker he was the inside friend of corporations, engaged in legislation to benefit such corporations, ruling as Speaker to save their bills, selling their worthless bonds and receiving large gratuities therefor, and the record of all this is in his own hand-writing.

"He has neither speech nor vote on record which can be, in the slightest sense, construed into favoring reform. Nothing toward abolishing useless offices, reducing expenditures, or cutting off any of the abuses which have become obnoxious to the people.

"It is a vote for a man who has adopted for himself a standard of morals so demoralizing and degrading, as not only to unfit him for the Presidential office, but for any public trust whatever.

"It is a vote for all that is lowest in tone, most reprehensible in methods, and most reckless in spirit, in political warfare. It is a vote for justification of repudiation in Virginia; and a proposition for the distribution of surplus moneys in the treasury, the most mischievous and demoralizing measure ever offered for public consideration.

"Fathers and mothers, it means a vote to undermine all your years of careful home influence, teaching your boy that the accumulation of wealth, by whatever means, is the one chief end of life.

"Are you willing to vote for your boy to follow this man's tactics through life, and hope that he will escape the penalty of wrong-doing?

"Lastly, it is a vote for a man whose God is gold; whose religion is stocks and bonds; whose church is a counting house, and whose character is a merchantable commodity.

"On the other hand, why should you vote for the Democratic nominee?

"Because every vote for him is a vote for honest government, honestly administered by an honest man; for clean

government against corruption ; for the benefit of the people, and not for private or party plunder. It is a vote for reform everywhere.

“ ‘Before our Ajax with helmet and shield’ the ‘Plumed Knight’ must bow low his haughty crest. Choose ye this night, not whom you will serve, but which of these men will best serve the best interests of our common country.”

“Well, I declare,” said Inez, “that last peroration quite takes away my breath, how can you remember it so well?”

“I have given it at least fifty times,” answered Miss Wayland, “and many times without notes of any kind.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

Inez continued: "You ought to have influence enough to dictate a member of the Cabinet."

Margaret's astonished eyes met her friend's, as she replied:

"I have never once thought of my work in such a light; and do not suppose that the President-elect, who is a conservative man, would admit for a moment that a woman should have an influence in politics."

"Then he is not fit to be a President," said Inez; "if a Republican had been elected you may be sure that a woman who had done what you have, would have had influence enough to suggest a friend for a Cabinet member."

Margaret thoughtfully answered, "God has always fitted him for every place he has been called to fill. I have no candidate for the Cabinet; so why should I trouble myself about that. If I were to go to the President-elect with a statement of fact, he would doubtless accept it as such, and if it recommended itself to his judgment, would I suppose, give it the same consideration that he would to a statement of fact from any other reliable source."

Washington had never witnessed a more brilliant spectacle than on the Fourth of March, 1885. It was a perfect spring day which contributed no little to the pleasure of the occasion.

To those who had been present at the same ceremonies every four years for a quarter of a century, there was nothing new in the display of bunting, the triumphal arches, the

evergreens and grand stands,—the visiting regiments—club uniforms—bands—banners—the rows of seats before the Public Buildings—or the processions. To these there was no novelty, in the solemn oath of office administered to the Head of the Nation; or the address which followed; but to-day there was a different crowd, large, enthusiastic, full of the spirit of being able to swing their hats for a successful candidate, for the first time in twenty-five years.

It was an enthusiastic, democratic crowd, which means that it was largely composed of the common people. The arrangements for the ball were just as brilliant and elaborate as on any previous occasion. It was well attended, and happiness seemed to reign supreme.

Then followed days and days, devoted to hand-shaking with the first Democratic President since the great sanguinary conflict, which left the two sections almost as hopelessly divided in feeling, as though the "lost cause" had been a triumphant one.

The press outside the White House was so great that an extra detail of police was necessary to protect the limbs of the populace from disaster, by the surging crowd. The office-seekers formed no inconsiderable part of this great army. There were literally hundreds of applicants for each specific office; and Miss Wayland became one of this eager throng. Never in her whole life had she found herself in so embarrassing a position. She had never yet been obliged to solicit employment.

Among those whom Miss Wayland frequently met was Ralph Winston. Sometimes they met at the office of the Post Master General, whom Winston had known when he was an unassuming private citizen, sometimes at the Interior Department; but wherever she encountered him, he always wore for her the same genial smile.

His political friends wished him to have some important foreign mission; but for reasons of his own he refused to accept anything but an appointment to Bezoer.

He was endorsed by the representative men of both parties in his own State, yet it was not until May that he secured his appointment.

Miss Wayland was still unprovided for. It was inexpressibly annoying to her, that she was obliged to seek the favor and services of many, whom she would have preferred serving.

Every time she called at East Capital Street, it was invariably to hear a tirade against the administration, that her case was held so long in abeyance.

"I like the President," Inez would say, "but I cannot forgive him for neglecting you so long; no one can have stronger claims upon the administration, and yet you are daily humiliated by seeing others preferred before you. Had this been a Republican administration, you would have had anything you wanted, either for yourself or your friends."

"But Inez it is not a Republican administration, for which I am very thankful. The President has done all that he consistently could. He has no right to use his public position to advance individual interests. I would rather never receive any benefit at his hands, than that the President of this great Nation, should compromise his position or violate his pledges in the slightest degree."

"That is all very amiable of you," said Inez, "but it is not right of him after all you have done and sacrificed for him and the party he represents. You even endorsed his moral character, on the platform and through the press, where you were known and respected. I have just been reading your reply to the newspaper attacks on him; they

certainly excel anything of the kind which I have read during the campaign."

"As to your last remark," said Margaret, "it was the least I could do as a conscientious woman, for a man whom I believed in, and whom I also believed to be the victim of a diabolical conspiracy. I assure you I worked from a sense of duty, not for office, but when I found that the avenue of work which I had chosen was closed against me through partisan spite, I very naturally turned to this Mecca of the unfortunate—a departmental clerkship. I am inclined to think that there might be some difficulty in my receiving confirmation at present if commissioned as you suggest, and the President knows this."

"I do not wish," she continued, "to enter into any contention, I am only seeking employment; besides, I am only one of the fifty-five millions of people, and while I have worked effectively through one campaign, the masses of the party have worked just as faithfully for twenty years."

With characteristic self-reliance Margaret determined to secure Civil Service Examination, and thus be ready for work when called upon, should she be so fortunate as to secure an appointment. She passed with credit to herself, and now felt that she could ask for a situation with confidence."

Going the rounds of the Departments one day, a Cabinet Minister, who had met Miss Wayland before, seeing her standing near, said:

"Miss Wayland the President spoke to me about you, but I had to tell him what I must tell you, that there is no vacancy in my department."

The President had told her that one of his Cabinet Ministers had promised to provide for her. This one had made requisition on the Civil Service Commission as he

thought, in accordance with the letter and spirit of the law, but the Commissioner had not so construed it.

In desperation over this failure, she had called upon the President of the Commission, to ascertain why she had not been appointed, and after a few unsatisfactory questions and answers, struck with the ludicrousness of her position, she laughingly said:

"The Democratic party seems to have one or two elephants on its hands which are hard to manage,—the Civil Service Law,—and Miss Wayland,—don't you think so?"

The gentleman smiled and replied: "I do not acknowledge that the Democratic party has any elephant on its hands, but I must confess that I think you are abundantly capable of taking care of yourself."

This gentleman would brook no interference in his business matters, and as the Civil Service Law was his hobby, Margaret's unfortunate remark, although at her own expense, steeled him against any concession.

After seven and a half months of patient waiting, Margaret at last received Civil Service appointment in the Treasury Department, where she had been employed as a substitute at half pay for the four previous months.

CHAPTER VIII

A GAME OF CARDS.

Margaret, whose busy hands were for once idle, sat reading the "Evening Star," when her eye was caught by this announcement.

"At the Arlington, Col. Ralph Winston, of Bezoor," then farther on she read: "Col. Winston is supposed to be looking after his confirmation, which is now being contested before the Senate."

With far-away speculative eyes, Margaret sat thoughtfully looking into the glowing coals of the grate, and said to herself.

"I have half a mind to do it, why not? This gentleman was kind to me, and now comes my opportunity to serve him."

Hastily throwing on her outer garments, she at once proceeded to the Arlington, and sent her card to Col. Winston. He immediately descended to the parlor and with a puzzled look on his face, advanced to meet his visitor.

"What," thought he, "can this mean, some female lobbyist, I suppose, but what can she want of me?"

With quiet self-possession and a smile of recognition, Margaret said:

"You do not remember me, Col. Winston, I am Miss Wayland."

"Indeed, I do," said he, "I was, I confess, somewhat puzzled at first, but your smile identified you at once; your face is not easily forgotten," added he gallantly.

"No doubt you are surprised to see me here," she said, at the same time handing him the paper with the marked paragraph; but I did not know how to reach you soon enough, for I know that time is important, and I believe I can assist you. I have a few influential friends who will be glad to serve me; and if I know your plans, I think I can further them."

The Colonel's grey eyes rested quizzically on her face for a moment, and then he cautiously said:

"I appreciate your kindness, Miss Wayland, and will be grateful for any such service as you can render me; but it is not true that I am here to secure my confirmation. If my record as an official does not satisfy the Senate that I am entitled to confirmation, I shall accept their decision and go home a sadder, perhaps, but wiser man."

After a little further conversation, and a better understanding of the details of his true mission to the Capital City, Margaret took leave of Col. Winston, promising to write him if successful with her friends.

Next day the Colonel received the following note:—

COLONEL WINSTON—

Dear Sir:—If convenient, I would be pleased to see you at room 58 before 2 o'clock, as the department closes to visitors at that hour.

MARGARET WAYLAND.

He immediately responded in person to the note, and pleading a previous engagement for this evening, made an appointment for the following one, when they would together devise means for carrying out their plans.

"To-morrow evening then," he said, "we will talk it over, and have a little visit, shall we?"

The expression of his eyes, and the warm hand-clasp which accompanied the last words, sent a thrill to Margaret's heart, which surprised herself; and after his departure, she

said, throwing herself back in the easy chair: "Ah, Margaret, Margaret, has life's hard lesson, still left you weak as this? After all these years of steady strife for an independent life, must you yield your soul for a loving glance?"

"No, I will not," continued she, as she clasped her hands before her, "I will not, I must be strong, and resist this strange influence."

Colonel Winston, as he left her presence that evening, was conscious of having said, or looked, much more than he intended, and thought:

"Well, well, I thought myself invulnerable in matters of the heart, and really what call have I to be otherwise here, this is a pure matter of business, I must be careful; but those dark eyes possess me, and I lose my head in her presence."

The appointed evening came, and as the door opened to receive Col. Winston, he was startled to feel that his heart, well schooled as it was, gave a bound which sent the blood whirling through his brain with lightning-like velocity; for Miss Wayland as she placed her hand in his and raised her dark shining eyes to his face, seemed to meet him with so glad a welcome, that he said to himself:

"This looks like a dangerous game, I am softer-hearted than I thought."

Then seating himself he said:

"Everything looks favorable, I have been fortunate enough to meet a Republican friend, who volunteered to look after my interests; and has ascertained that my confirmation is assured, so our work is very much simplified."

Miss Wayland expressed her satisfaction, and after a little further business conversation, seeing that her guest was inclined to prolong his visit, suggested a game of cards.

He smilingly assented, remarking that it was "too late for another call."

The game, not requiring undivided attention, was interspersed with conversation which lightly and pleasantly passed the time.

Margaret was uneasily conscious of an occasional earnest questioning look on the face of her guest, and sought to divert his attention by inquiries of the new territory of which he had just become an important official.

"I have been greatly interested in the development of that country from hearing our home missionaries talk about it," said Margaret, "I suppose their customs differ very much from ours."

"Yes," the Colonel replied, "they have a great many peculiar superstitions, and the ones which struck me as being most strange were these: they never take their dead out of the house through a door; and a child is never born in the home, but in a special place set apart for that purpose."

"Our Church Missionaries represent the natives to be far superior to the aboriginal inhabitants of this section," said Margaret.

"They are far superior," answered he, "they have clear intellects, are industrious, and are skilled workers in wood. They are shrewd, sharp traders, and yield readily to civilized influences."

After a victorious game, and a flashing upward glance, Margaret said:

"I have not the honor and pleasure of playing cards with so distinguished a guest every evening, hence, I believe I am doing better than usual."

"Ah," he replied, "you must look out for your laurels, for I am determined to win this time."

"You will not," said she. "I always improve as the evening advances."

With a steady light in his soft grey eyes, he said: "I shall

win, for I wish to, and the wager shall be a kiss. Do you consent?"

Margaret, with a flushing cheek and indignant tone, declined the wager, saying:

"Kisses are the coin of love, too precious for ordinary use."

With a keen appreciation of the blush, he had called forth, the Colonel permitted himself to indulge in many pleasantries which called forth a quick response from his bright vis-a-vis.

Game after game the Colonel came out victorious, and with laughing eyes he playfully alluded to the payment of the wager.

At last he arose and offering his hand to Margaret, said quietly:

"You know you are now indebted to me, will you cancel the debt?" at the same time moving quickly forward to claim the forfeit.

Margaret, with a sudden sense of strange timidity retreated and attempted to withdraw her hand, but found it imprisoned in a strong clasp, and a pair of earnest eyes smiled in her own with—could she be mistaken—love in their grey depths.

Laughingly, he said: "I refuse to depart until the forfeit is paid" and still holding her hand, with a gentle force seated her on the sofa, and took his seat beside her.

Wishing to divert his attention, Margaret said: "Do you bring your bride to Washington, Col. Winston?" for she had heard such a rumor.

He started in surprise as she asked the question and replied: "Have you heard that report too? Indeed there is nothing in it; I have never thought of marrying again, my daughter and I have been all in all to each other; but her marriage has left me rather lonely," emphasizing the

last clause by a tender glance toward the dark eyes so close to his own.

"Is it possible that you are a married man," said Margaret, "excuse me, but I had always thought you a bachelor."

"No," said he, "I am a widower, but that makes no difference, does it?"

Had Margaret been asked how long she had known Col. Winston as a public representative man, identified with the best elements of his party; how long she had known him by sight, when their speaking acquaintance began, she would have been unable to answer; and yet she had never known that he had been a married man. She had regarded him much as she would an estimable friend of her own sex; believing him a bachelor and knowing that bachelors were invariably won by gay young girls, or charming widows, had never dreamed of attracting him to herself. At once, in spite of reason, judgment, anything; feeling the eloquent passion of his eyes upon her, she realized that her heart had gone out to him past recall; and reading the swift upward glance aright, he exacted the forfeit from her warm and willing lips.

Alas! what tongue can tell how surely the weal or woe of a whole life may be unalterably sealed in one short five minutes.

Immediately rising, still with her hand in his own, with a sudden movement he placed the white hand within his arm, and turned to the pier glass before which they were standing, looking curiously at their reflected figures, then once more sought to read the language of her speaking eyes, and without a word turned on his heel and left the room.

To Margaret the whole affair had been a revelation, not only of him, but of herself. With flaming cheeks and a

wildly beating heart, she acknowledged to herself that this man, with the intellect and oratorical powers of a statesman, the most sterling honesty, modest as a school-girl, and the physical development of an athlete, was her master.

She said to herself, "how has this happened? I certainly did not try to win him; but if looks mean anything, he loves me. Will the dear God bless me with this love? Will I ever be his wife?"

Then falling on her knees she earnestly besought the care and guidance of her Heavenly Father.

CHAPTER IX

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

Two evenings later the Colonel called again. It was impossible to disguise his admiration for Miss Wayland; and she did not attempt to conceal her pleasure in the society of the distinguished Colonel.

"I have always supposed you were a widow until recently," said he, "the first time I called I did not know whether to ask for Mrs. or Miss Wayland."

"The mistake is not unusual," replied she, "people have always persisted in calling me Mrs. even when they knew better. I have never known whether it was because I had the settled look of a wife, or because I was interesting enough to be mistaken for a widow. My friend Mrs. Tripp, is fond of telling me that I am not at all like an old maid."

The Colonel looked about the room with admiring eyes, and thought, "Well, this woman whether maiden or widow, knows how to give a home charm to the place she occupies," and Miss Wayland, noticing the direction of his eyes, said :

"There are an appalling number of stitches in that piece of work, Col. Winston, I think I must have been three years in making it."

"You made it? Made the money to buy it with you mean."

"O, no," she said, "I made it stitch by stitch, getting tired of it, and laying it away, then picking up and going on with it."

"Then you do sometimes, the kind of work which makes up the life of other women?" said the Colonel, as with a look of keen inquiry his eyes sought her face.

She saw at once that he, like many another man, was incredulous that a woman could do public work and still be a womanly woman; and she determined to disabuse his mind of that idea.

She said, "you men labor under a curious delusion, if you suppose that a woman of intellect is necessarily un-womanly in her tastes and habits. I have done nearly everything that comes within the province of woman's work, and I firmly believe that every girl's education in the line of housekeeping should be duly attended to. My mother also believed this, and I have been through the entire curriculum of domestic ways and means."

"And has not your public life unfitted you for this kind of work?" said the Colonel.

"No, indeed, only prepared me to appreciate more fully the value of a home, and all that a home implies—home duties and associations."

As Margaret raised her eyes to the face of her visitor, the expression of his earnest eyes, showed that she had betrayed the longing for home rest and comfort, which had haunted her for many a day. With heightened color, she continued hastily:

"Because a woman can make a speech, it does not follow that she cannot make a loaf of bread, or a cup of coffee equally well."

The Col. did not remain much longer, and seemed quite lost in thought; but when he arose to go, as he held her hand at parting, he said: "Miss Wayland I dare not come to you any more. I am aware without vanity, that we are mutually attracted to each other, and as I am no woman's peace-destroyer, I think discretion is the better part of valor; and I must forego the pleasure of your society in the future."

As she raised her dark eyes to his own, he was struck

by the wordless woe in their clear depths, and quickly added, "I am not a foe to marriage, but my daughter, whom I love, and who has controlled my life from childhood, would I am sure never give her consent. I owe all the good in me, and every worthy ambition I possess to her, and she has a right to my life. I shall never marry without her full consent."

Margaret's mind was full of foreboding, reasoning with herself, she said: "I love this man, what right has a child to exact such implicit obedience from a father? She has her husband and home. I am encroaching on no real right of hers, or of any other woman. I have a right to win him if I can, and I will."

When he ceased speaking, she only replied with a smile.

"Nevertheless you will come again, and—you will be very welcome."

He did come again and again; and they talked of "All things grave and gay," questions of the day and hour were discussed, light pleasantries were exchanged, and as the acquaintance progressed Margaret began to look with eager eyes for his coming, and knew that her heart had gone wholly out of her own keeping.

One evening he hastily entered her parlor, and after seating himself, said:

"I am annoyed," and laughing nervously, added, "You look surprised, but I am a western man, and not accustomed to the manners of the east. In passing a house on Fourteenth street, I was accosted by a lady, whom I at first did not recognize, but finally remembered having met her at the Capitol. Some officious Member had introduced her, and I never expected to meet her again; but to my astonishment she addressed me like an old acquaintance, saying:

"You are surely not passing my house, and not coming in."

Seeing that he paused for a reply, Margaret said: "And what reply did you make to your would-be captor?"

"I said, 'Madam, I rarely make calls, so you will excuse me at present'."

"Your case is not an isolated one," said Margaret, "the peculiar character of Washington society permits all sorts of people to secure introductions to prominent gentlemen; and presuming upon that, they will claim acquaintance, ask favors, and otherwise render life unbearable to Members of Congress who can help through a bill, or control a vote."

Margaret was in fine spirits this evening, and her vivacity of manner seemed to impress the Colonel even more than usual. At last he said, while his eyes dwelt lovingly on her face:

"Margaret, you are certainly a very lovable woman. I cannot understand how you can reconcile yourself to a Departmental life."

"Could I choose for myself I might choose a more flowery path, but as that is my present duty, I make the best of it, and get some amusement out of it at the same time. I like to watch the men who try to escape responsibility, and do just as little work as possible in the allotted time."

"Yes, I can see how you might be interested in that, but even that would become tiresome after a little."

"There is quite enough to interest a person as long as I expect to be there," she answered, "in watching the peculiar manner of those who have manipulated the Civil Service Law to suit themselves."

"A large proportion, mind, I do not say a large majority, but a large proportion of the clerks getting from nine to eighteen hundred dollars salary, do not do as much work as you would require if you were paying fifty cents per day for services."

"They (some of them) have the audacity to tell me that I have no business in the Government employ, because I have a profession and could support myself. Many of these clerks, belonging to the old regime, hold that any one who is capable of earning a living in any other capacity has no right to be there; but that every woman who is incapable of earning her support is justly entitled to be supported by the tax-payers of the nation.

"One lady clerk said to me one day, 'We have never been treated like criminals before this administration, but always regarded as ladies and gentlemen'.

"Under Republican rule they had been accustomed to doing their work with as much speed as they pleased, and then going home. Some clerks would not average two hours a day in the Department, and as soon as the new rules obliged them to put in legal hours, they would break down under the extra time.

"They frequently say to me, 'You will never get promoted, Miss Wayland, you are too honest; it is those who know how to fill out the time and work as little as possible who get the promotions.'

"If you say, 'Business is business in Government employ as well as elsewhere', they answer you by saying:

"'Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm'."

"But they surely do not all take those grounds, Miss Wayland."

"No," she answered, "but here is another class, the Civil Service employe, who says that, 'Departmental service should be reduced to a business basis, and not treated as a matter of bargain and sale'.

"'Very good,' I say, 'but that means getting the best work, and the most of it, for the salary paid. Here the lady at my right has been doing better work and more of it for a year than men on this division who have a salary of

sixteen hundred dollars, and she gets but seven hundred and twenty. No other business in the country would permit such a discrepancy. If these matters were resolved to a business basis, the salaries would be reversed and the lady promoted."

"If all these things come under your notice now, what must it have been under the old administration," said the Colonel.

"O," she replied, "under the Republican Civil Service rule, they allowed a democrat to be appointed just often enough to keep up an appearance of non-partisanship, sometimes a democrat received an appointment, and while he was serving his probationary period they would manage to defeat his permanent appointment. I have known of that being done in the early days of this administration, in the Treasury Department by the old Republican ring. They had the man detailed to a department where they could dictate to its head, (before he was removed, he is now gone) and then did their villianous work; the young man does not know to this day what defeated him.

"They made two points in this case, first showing that a democrat was less intelligent and capable than a Republican, and then defeating him.."

"As you seem to have looked pretty deeply into this matter, I would like to ask you what you think of Civil Service?" said the Colonel.

"That is a leading question in these days," she replied, "the only trouble with the Civil Service is that it does not go far enough, that is, they do not carry it out. Without it, and under the old spoils system, this country would have been almost past redemption in a few years more; but it should be exacting enough to secure the very best work for the salaries paid in all the places held by incompetent persons.

"In the matter of promotion it is a common thing to make a false record by getting a fellow clerk to re-examine the work, so that no error slips will be found, and they often destroy these slips.

"Some of the Republican clerks say, "There has never been a dollar stolen;—yet I know that twenty-five persons drawing salaries of \$1400 each, spent three months of the last Presidential campaign directing campaign literature, from the National Republican Headquarters. It took a whole year under this administration to bring up some of the desks of current work. The truth is, that the clerical work of the Government could be done with two-thirds the number of clerks employed under Republican rule, if they were selected upon the basis of capacity. This reduction of numbers would soon bring up all arrears, while incompetent persons would be removed, and their places filled as far as needful, with faithful servants of the public good.

"You see, do you not, that there is much in this life to interest a thoughtful person?"

"Yes," said Col. Winston, "I do, I think you are in your element, but I would not live in Washington, if I could have the best office in the gift of the Government; unless I had plenty of money back of it."

"O, you are mistaken," she said, "of course if one has little or no intellect, they must have money here as elsewhere, but there are some things better than money.

"The most popular family in Washington is that of Senator Dugoin, and they are not by any means rich, but Mrs. Dugoin's fine intellect, generous heart, and wifely devotion are worth more to her husband in Washington, than any millionaire Senator's money is to him."

A strange expression flitted across the Col's. face, and with an impatient movement he arose to his feet, and prepared to leave. Margaret was surprised that he should so

suddenly have taken offence, as she supposed; and her mind reverted to all she had said, without finding a clue to his changed demeanor; at last she ventured to say:

"Have I said anything to offend you? Are you angry with me?"

"No, only with myself," he replied, "I am weaker than I thought, that I will continue to subject myself to the influence of your society."

Margaret only smiled in reply, and accompanied him to the door as he bade her "good night."

A whole week elapsed before he called again; and as Margaret came forward to greet him, he exclaimed, as his admiring glance took in her face and figure, "You look like a princess. Pardon me but it is true."

Margaret made some evasive reply, and laughed lightly, knowing well that her dress had much to do with her royal look this evening. She had been making calls,—returning just in time for dinner, and had just entered her own parlor before Col. Winston's arrival.

Her plain black velvet dress with soft ruching about the neck and wrists, served to show off the fine complexion, the dark eyes, and beautiful abundant hair, to the very best advantage.

Margaret was no weak and winsome beauty, but a noble, dignified-looking woman. No wonder that she seemed to have a regal beauty for this man, who for some unknown reason was waging such a war with himself against her attractions; but strive as he might, he could not resist the indefinable power which drew him near her, and held him captive.

On this evening he seemed inclined to listen rather than talk; and very soon referred to Miss Wayland's temperance work in the far west, saying:

"It must have been hard work, and you undoubtedly met many strange people."

"Yes, but I liked it, and everybody was ready to receive me, even if they did not care for my cause. Of course I said very little about temperance except upon the platform, and as a consequence, everyone came to my meetings, which were held sometimes at military posts, and sometimes in the villages or towns along the route. My methods, which were arranged with reference to the peculiar characteristics of the frontier people, were phenomenally successful. At this time I was writing for Eastern papers and recommending emigration to the West; and while this was done with an honest conviction of its desirability, it had an influence in my favor; for the railroad men regarded me much in the light of a traveling emigration agent. In the same way I had written of frontier towns, and town-site men devoted themselves to making my work a success."

"What did you do when you entered a new town?" said the Col.

"I called first at the newspaper offices where they were invariably courteous. I went in person to the saloons inviting the proprietors to my meetings, promising not to abuse them if they would come. I have often known of their going home and saying to their wives:

"I like that temperance woman, I want you to go and call upon her and invite her to dinner."

The saloon men of the frontier are not always bad men, but their business is often the only thing they can engage in without much capital. Many of them have come from the East in a fit of desperation; and with a determination to get a financial start again, take up the business which requires least capital, and promises the largest returns. They are away from their former conservative surroundings, and enter upon this life with the theory often expressed:

"If I did not sell liquor, some one else would."

They frequently closed up business and came with their entire crowd to the temperance meeting. At one town in the Black Hills, I had a letter of introduction from a minister to a saloon keeper, who was once a literary lecturer in Michigan. The letter ran this wise: "This will introduce Miss Wayland, who will not abuse you; but will talk temperance to the people. You will confer a favor by treating her the best you know how, which is good enough for any one."

"Well that was peculiar," said the Colonel. "What was the result of that?"

"Good," she answered, "for I had an audience that evening chiefly made up of liquor men; the very class of people whom I wished to reach. There was not a woman in the audience; two came in, but seemed frightened and retired."

"You must have had great courage and perseverance."

"I suppose I had, for really sometimes it was like "bearding the lion in his den, the Douglas in his hall." At one time I was accompanied by the wife of a minister on a visit to a typical frontier town in Montana, a railroad terminus. A schedule of the business of the town, which was given us before we went will give you some idea of what we had to contend with, I think I have it still," and stepping to a door in the wall, Margaret disclosed a row of book shelves where she kept manuscripts, letters, etc., and quickly running them over she selected one from which a long strip of paper unfolded. Standing by the side of the Colonel's chair they together read the list:

- 2 General Stores and Saloon.
- 1 Grocery Store and Saloon.
- 1 Clothing Store and Saloon.
- 4 Boarding Houses and Saloon.
- 1 Drug Store and Saloon.

- 2 Dance Houses and Saloon.
- 1 Dance Opera House and Saloon.
- 1 Barber Shop and Saloon.
- 2 Keno Gambling Houses and Saloon.
- 1 Faro Gambling House and Saloon.
- 2 Barber Shops ; straight.
- 1 Jewelry Store ; straight.
- 3 Laundries ; straight.
- 1 Blacksmith Shop ; straight.
- 1 Dry Goods Store ; straight.
- 1 Drug and Dry Goods Store ; straight.
- 1 Post Office ; straight.
- 5 Dwellings.
- 19 Saloons.

"You can imagine," resumed Margaret, "that the people of such a place would look with astonishment at two women who would dare to come there for the purpose of reforming them. But strange as it may appear, perhaps for the very temerity of the attempt, the people turned out en masse, to hear us, for four consecutive nights, and at the end of that time were ready to help us prosecute our work in every other such place in that country. We obtained here more than fifty signatures to the pledge."

"Where did you hold your meetings in such a town?" inquired the Colonel.

"In the freight room of the railroad depot."

"How did you get the people together?"

"We went every day through all the business places, inviting every one to come and hear us, and at night put a little organ on the depot platform and played and sang until they came."

As the Colonel started for home that evening, he pulled his hat fiercely over his eyes, and as he strode on, said to himself: "Strange woman, powerful and good, or,—I wonder if she could be dangerous. How she attracts me."

CHAPTER X.

THE EVENING PARTY AT MRS. TRIPPS.

Margaret entered Room 55 one morning to ask Elie some question about Mrs. Dugoin, wife of the Senator, as she was anxious to present Col. Winston to this charming lady; Elie answered the questions satisfactorily and said:

"I am acquainted with Colonel Winston's brother, he has been one of my kind friends, and has been willing to help me to retain my position in the Department. I would like to meet him, and also show him some little attention. Do you think he would spend an evening with us? I will invite my cousin, Maj. Brown, to meet him. I believe they are already acquainted."

"I will speak to Col. Winston," said Margaret, "I think he will accept your invitation."

That evening, during the Colonel's call, Margaret referred to Elie's invitation, and to her surprise he at once accepted, saying:

"I will be pleased to accompany you to Mrs. Tripps to meet Maj. Brown, on Thursday evening, if that will be satisfactory."

It was so arranged and Elie notified of the time appointed. On Thursday morning she came hurriedly to Miss Wayland's desk, and said nervously, "I have some splendid wine, shall I serve it this evening?"

Margaret smiling at her trepidation, said:

"Am I then such a bug-bear to my friends on account of my temperance principles, that they actually tremble in my presence?" and she laid her hand caressingly on Elie's while she continued, "I never drink wine myself, and never

offer it to my friends, but I would be very sorry to know that my presence was a restraint upon others."

"What do you give your friends, Margaret?"

"For drink? Lemonade," she answered.

"Very well, I will have some for you," said Elie, looking much relieved.

She had a charming manner, and on this evening entertained her guests with such genuine hospitality, that each felt themselves to be the honored member of the party, and each one gave of their best to add to its pleasure.

Col. Winston never appeared to better advantage, and responded readily to Elie's attempts to draw him out on the subject of the country of which he had so lately become an important official.

In speaking of its mining interests, he exhibited a large nugget of gold, from one of the mines, and dilated at length on the advantages offered to settlers. In relation to the natives, he said:

"The women are the head of the house and do all the managing, the men always deferring to them in all things. I think also," he smilingly added, "that the women must do all the courting, as one of the most distinguished of them has, through the interpreter, asked me to marry her; she said she would send away the husband she had now, if I would take his place."

"What was your answer?" laughed Maj. Brown, while the narrator flushed, under the eyes which were turned toward him.

"O, I—well, I think I gave her to understand that—that it was rather unusual in my country to—to marry under such circumstances."

Margaret's beautiful eyes were gravely fixed on the Col. and she was surprised at his evident embarrassment, while she wondered what thought had so tied the usually ready

tongue of her friend. He hastily changed the topic of conversation, by saying :

"We have at Bezoer, a magnificent temple built by the aborigines; many of its interior decorations are of solid gold."

This led to other subjects of thought, and soon refreshments were served. As the wine was offered to Col. Winston, he declined it kindly and courteously, as did Maj. Brown, with a furtive look at Miss Wayland, which she quickly interpreted, and said :

"Gentlemen, do not permit me to interrupt the pleasure of the evening, if I conjecture rightly that you decline your wine in deference to my well known temperance principles."

Col. Winston immediately responded by raising the glass to his lips, merely touching it, however and saying :

"Your health and happiness, Miss Wayland."

Maj. Brown, with a bow, raised his glass at the same time, and slightly tipping its dainty rim, repeated her name, while she acknowledged the honor by a gracious smile, and slight inclination of the head. Lemonade was passed and drank, and the little cloud which threatened, proved only a pleasant episode of the evening.

Mrs. Tripp, knowing that Margaret was an excellent reader, suggested that it would add much to the pleasure of the evening if she would favor them with a recitation.

With easy grace and no attempt at apology, she smilingly complied and rendered a humorous selection, entitled, "Courtship Under Difficulties" with an evidently keen sense of its humor, suiting her voice to its rather difficult requirements, with great facility.

This was followed by another and another, her small audience being unwilling to lose the sound of that finely modulated voice.

As she resumed her seat, Col. Winston said :

"You have indeed given us a pleasure, Miss Wayland, and I am heartily glad that there is something at last, to entertain people with beside singing. I am fond of music, but I am afraid, not cultivated up to the classical stand-point, and therefore do not enjoy the modern young lady's efforts at the piano."

"I agree with you," answered Maj. Brown, "we never hear now-a-days the sweet Scotch songs, and the home airs, which were so popular when Jenny Lind won the hearts of the people, with her simple melodies."

"There is one advantage about recitations," said Mrs. Tripp, "if a person can recite at all, there is no excuse of 'I haven't my music.' The music of a well trained voice, and a good memory being all that is required."

"Yes," said Miss Wayland, "but it means something more than getting up and 'saying your piece.' There are few, very few musicians who expend as much time and care in making the mechanical seem natural, as does the finished elocutionist."

"You have given much attention to it, have you not?" said Elie.

"What I could, certainly," she replied, "for I am very fond of the work."

Col. Winston had hardly taken his eyes from the bright face of Margaret since she began to recite, and as she met his expression of unmistakable admiration, her heart said: "he loves me, he loves me."

Maj. Brown was then induced to give a burlesque temperance lecture, which was very amusing, after which the conversation naturally fell into the channels of Washington Departmental life, Civil Service, and its sometimes uncivil accompaniments; of Bezoor and its mining interests; until the President's much talked of marriage was referred to,—upon which Miss Wayland remarked with an arch look at

the Colonel: "I believe Col. Winston embodied his opinion in his Report."

"Why, how is that?" said Elie and the gentlemen looked inquiringly toward the speaker.

"He said that marriages were made in Heaven," she replied with a heightened color, for she saw that she had betrayed her interest in his utterances, even if they came in the form of a dry Report.

The Colonel's look of astonishment was unfeigned, as he bent his stately head and said:

"Miss Wayland you have done me great honor, I did not hope that you took sufficient interest in Bezoor,—or me," he added in a lower tone, "to read that collection of dry statistics."

"I read it and did not find it uninteresting," she replied.

"I must, however," continued the Colonel, "disabuse your mind of the nature of the remark you quoted; I said that it was well that they were made in Heaven, as they could not be made in Bezoor."

They soon began to make preparations for departure and Maj. Brown said: "We have certainly spent a very enjoyable evening, I would like to repeat it."

"Well," said Margaret, "why not? I would be pleased to see you at my rooms on any evening upon which you may decide."

"I do not know that I shall be here," said Col. Winston, and turning to Elie, he said: "I have never before been separated from my daughter more than two weeks at a time, and I am very anxious to see her."

"Well" said Margaret, "we will leave the matter indefinite, and decide upon the time, when you ascertain how long you will remain in the city."

As she took the arm of Col. Winston that evening, Margaret felt that he assumed a proprietorship, which she

was only too pleased to acknowledge. His grave low voice and tender manner, made her heart throb with a happiness it had not known for years.

As he left her, he said, with a warm pressure of the hand; "I will call very soon, with your permission."

Margaret replied: "You know you have that."

Not long after this evening's visit, Col. Winston made his appearance in Miss Wayland's parlor. His face wore a look of gloom, and his eyes wandered, as though he might be engaged in troubled thought.

Margaret said: "How did you like Mrs. Tripp?"

"Very much," he replied, "she has that rare gift among women, the faculty of making everyone appear at their best, when with her."

"Yes, I think so, and she never thrusts herself forward, but is mindful of the comfort of her friends, while she exercises a graceful tact in drawing them out." Margaret continued, "I would like to invite some friends here, will you come as Mrs. Tripp's escort?"

"O, No! No!" said he; "do not ask me to appear interested in a charming widow; however, I will go with you to call upon her if you choose."

"You make a distinction without a difference, it seems to me, Colonel. Why should you fear the influence of a widow more than any other lady?"

"I am sure I don't know," he answered, "but I am satisfied of one thing, that as I am here on business only, I must forego the pleasures of society, and meet the ladies as seldom as possible. I find that I am quite too susceptible."

There was always a peculiar reticence in Col. Winston's manner, a mysterious something which seemed to compel him to stop just short of a declaration. His eyes said unmistakably, "I love you." His lips kept a discreet silence.

Margaret wondered what could be the obstacle which forbade perfect confidence between them; but thought, "I can be patient; all will be right in time. Perhaps he is troubled about business matters. I will see Congressman Wills to-morrow. I think he can assist him."

Mrs. Wills was a warm personal friend of Miss Wayland's, and for her sake asked her husband to use his influence for her friend's friend. Mr. Wills, who was still an ardent lover of his wife, and could not refuse her slightest wish, said:

"I will do what I can, my dear; not only because you are interested in it, but because I believe that he will be the right man in the right place."

Miss Wayland soon called on Mr. Wills, and found him prepared to listen to her statement of the case. She plunged at once into the center of the business, making no apologies for her unusual interest.

"Mr. Wills," said she, "can you not help Col. Winston to secure his confirmation? I regard him as one of the most estimable men I have ever met; deserving of better treatment than he is getting at the hands of those who have the matters in charge. He is, of course, anxious to reach his post of duty, and has little doubt of his ultimate success, but the delay is discouraging."

"I have met the Col.," replied Mr. Wills, "I think he is a genuine honest fellow. The President might have sifted the entire party and not found another man so well fitted, apparently, to perform the duties of that office. He is energetic, fearless, and aggressive. He makes a good speech; but is very impulsive, Miss Wayland."

"Is he? I have seen nothing of that peculiarity; on the contrary, have thought him too cautious."

"I will tell you the circumstances, and you can judge for yourself. We have a Mr. Wescott here, who married

one of the Bezoor natives. He is an attorney of Bezoor monopolies or rings, and in the interests of his clients he opposes everything the Col. seeks in favor of the people of Bezoor. This man was before the committee at the same time with Col. Winston. Wescott claimed that the Bezoor natives were not capable of citizenship. As soon as the Col. had an opportunity he sprang to his feet and exclaimed: 'It does not become the gentleman to cry down a nationality from which he has taken his wife.' This remark fell like a thunderbolt on the ears of the committee, and so offended a number of them that they declared that Col. Winston should never again be permitted to appear before them. If I had been in Wescott's place my resentment would have taken a palpable shape, I assure you. He should be more discreet than to attack a man's wife in a public place like that."

"But, Mr. Wills, I cannot think that he meant to cast any reflections on the woman. He has made himself misunderstood some way. The man exasperated him by assuming their incapability of citizenship, and struck by his inconsistency, he instantly arose in defence of the people whose interests he is here to serve."

"But you see, Miss Wayland, that is what I object to; he injured his own cause and theirs by his indiscretion."

"I suppose he is impatient because all his work is blocked through the delay in his confirmation, and the uncertainty; for if he is not confirmed, his successor may have very different ideas of Bezoor's needs."

After leaving the house of Mr. Wills, Margaret immediately dispatched a note to the Col., writing all the complimentary things she had heard of him and of the mistake he had made.

He called that evening, and in the course of the conversation said:

"Who told you about the committee matter?"

"I do not know that I am at liberty to tell, Col. Winston."

"Let me see," he said, bending his laughing grey eyes on her face, "it must have been Mr. Wills; yes, I see that I am right, for you change color."

"That is a habit of mine," she said laughingly; "but no matter who it was, it is not good policy to do so any more."

"But Miss Wayland, I had no thought of making a fling at that man's wife; she is a lady, and far superior to her husband. I only sought to show the fallacy of his reasoning, by proving that he belied the people to whom he had paid the high compliment, of selecting a wife from their number."

The next time that Margaret called at Congressman Wills' her bright eyes and happy expression called forth a jesting remark from the good-humored M. C.

"You must have been successful in your enterprise I am sure," said he.

"Yes," she replied, "I have just been to the Civil Service rooms in the interest of a friend, and have won it, I think."

"You ought to win, Miss Wayland; the energy and perseverance you evince in anything you undertake, ought not to go unrewarded. Did you see the President of the Commission?"

"Yes, and he asked if I was going to the wedding, the Presidential wedding I suppose he meant."

"I told him that I was going to my own if I was fortunate enough to have one; he replied that if I could find a man of brains, he would give his consent. I think he would even be willing to give away the bride."

Mr. Wills looking up with an expression of astonishment on his fine face exclaimed: "Would you marry, Miss Wayland?"

"Certainly, why not?" she answered; "I have not taken a vow of celibacy, but am waiting for the right man. I do not believe in marriage, simply for the purpose of writing Mrs. before some man's name, but always did believe that the aim of every true woman's existence should be to become a happy wife and mother."

"I don't know how I got the impression," he said, "but somehow the idea had fixed itself in my mind, that you had a prejudice against the marriage state. Look here," he continued, "there is a fine, wealthy bachelor in my State, who heard you speak in the last campaign. He was greatly impressed with your appearance, and came to me in serious earnest to ascertain if I knew anything about you. I had just been speaking at Putnam, and could not only speak from personal acquaintance, but from the esteem in which I knew you were held by your friends in Putnam. I said to him: 'Why don't you go and make her acquaintance?'"

"O, she would not marry any one," he replied.

"I am sure I cannot conjecture why people get that idea of me, and many married ladies seem to envy me; as though there was anything to envy in my lonely life," she said regretfully.

"The reason why people think you would not marry, Miss Wayland, is because you can do as you please, without a tyrant of a husband to give orders or ask questions."

"I am sure, Mr. Wills, that your wife is not among the number," she smilingly answered; "but truly it is no fault of mine that God has placed me in circumstances where I have been obliged to sustain myself, and support others. My nature is like any other woman's; and I think sometimes that it would be a happy day when I could lay down my own will and lean upon a strong arm, and a true heart, always looking up to my self-constituted lord and king."

She spoke with feeling, and Mr. Wills said earnestly:

"Now, Miss Wayland, permit me to introduce my friend to you."

"O, no, Mr. Wills, I could not, indeed I could not."

"But why? He is well worthy of any woman's love; and I know that he was and is, greatly interested in you."

"Mr. Wills," said she earnestly, "you have been very kind to me, and I tell you in confidence, there is only one man in the wide world who can ever be anything to me, and his name is Ralph Winston."

"I am surprised," he answered; "I supposed that your work for him was purely partisan; I never dreamed of there being a personal interest."

"It was only that at first, but this feeling has grown upon me, until it is a part of my life."

"If I had known this, I would not have told you of the committee matter."

"Why not, sir? It seems to me that was just the right thing to do. How could a wrong be righted if it was not known? This must be righted, will you do it?"

"I will try to do so, I have already promised Col. Winston that I would make a personal explanation to each of the disaffected members of the committee. He simply thought he was making a good hit, and had no such idea as was imputed to him. He has 'brains enough,' Miss Wayland."

Col. Winston was suffering at this time with constant fits of depression, and when questioned, attributed it to ill health. Margaret urged him to see a physician or try some medicine for malaria. He persistently refused to do anything, insisting that he would soon be better.

"It is not malaria, Miss Wayland," said he, "I am troubled about many things;" and as he pressed her hand and looked into her eyes, she thought: "There is nae need o' speech atween us."

With a quick movement, he said: "I will see you to-morrow," and left her.

To-morrow came and so did not the Colonel, another day passed and he did not come. Margaret began to feel anxious, for he had always kept his engagements; at last a friend informed her that he was really very ill.

"What shall I do?" she said to herself, "he is alone and I cannot go to him of course, he has given me no right to do that." Finally she decided to write him, and as she honestly believed that the cause of his illness was the intense struggle he was making between inclination and duty, (or what he thought to be so) she determined to tell him plainly how she looked upon it. She wrote:

"I do not wish to upbraid you, but I assure you that I do not feel responsible for the present state of affairs; you have given me to understand in every possible way that you loved me, you have even confided to me the nature of the obstacle that separates us. Now, while I admire the love between a parent and child, I confess that I do not see the right of the latter to stand between him and happiness, which means usefulness. I write this with the same earnest feeling for your welfare, that I would have for a friend in whom I was interested. I seem to stand outside of it all, and look on: pitying you and pitying myself, for my destiny will be greatly affected by your decision.

Only be honest and true to your own convictions, and merciful to your friend,

MARGARET WAYLAND.

CHAPTER XI.

CONFIRMED.

Col. Winston's confirmation was still delayed, and he found it impossible to accomplish the work which he desired to do without it.

Margaret remarked, one morning to her friend Elie, "You know and like the Col.'s brother, can you not for his sake use your influence in behalf of the Col.?"

"Yes," said Elie thoughtfully, "I would not hesitate to ask Senator Dugoin, Williams, or Boynton; I am acquainted also with Senators Anderson and Wolf. Senator Boynton would consider it a pleasure to do what he could for me, I am sure.

"I believe he considers himself somewhat indebted to me. The circumstances are these: I once had a slight acquaintance with a family living here, who were suddenly overtaken by some financial disaster; the husband and father prostrated by a severe illness, and absolute poverty staring them in the face. A friend of mine informed me that he was sure they were on the verge of starvation, but were too proud to ask for aid.

"I went to see them, and as delicately as I could offered them the loan of fifty dollars, saying, 'If you are ever able to pay it, all right; if not, all right.'

"Some time after this I came near losing my position (through the jealousy which always exists more or less in these departments).

"One evening, much to my surprise, a card was brought up to me, bearing the name of Senator Boynton, then an

entire stranger to me. I received him, and he immediately handed me a note which he had received from this lady, stating the facts and asking him 'for the love of Heaven' to help me in my need, as I had to come the rescue in hers.

"The Senator said: 'Mrs. Tripp, that lady is my own cousin, and the brightest woman I ever knew; I have not known where she was living for twenty years. Now I want to pay you that fifty dollars, and render you any aid that I can in your present difficulty; and I wish also to say, that if I can ever be of any service to you at any time, you have only to command me.'"

Margaret softly said: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

These two ladies immediately set out to find the names of those who were on the committee, and when they ascertained that Senator Williams was one of them, Mrs. Tripp expressed her pleasure, saying:

"I am perfectly at home in his house. I will attend to this business at once."

Margaret being satisfied that Elie was sufficiently interested, went to the house of Senator Milton, where she always received the same cordial welcome, as when they extended to her the kind protection which she so much needed.

"Senator," she said, "I am come on business this time; the first call of the kind I have ever made upon a Senator. It is all Greek to me, I do not even know how to begin."

"Well, what is it?" he answered.

"I came to see if I could do or say anything to bring about Col. Winston's confirmation at once."

"Did the Colonel ask you to do this, Miss Wayland?"

"He did not," she replied; "he has no knowledge of my coming, but knowing how much he desires favorable action, and hearing that you had charge of the matter, I thought

perhaps I might venture upon my personal acquaintance with you to say a word in his favor."

The Senator's keen, dark eyes scanned Miss Wayland's face closely as he said quietly:

"I have no right to tell you anything about it, or when it is likely to be acted upon. I should subject myself to expulsion from the Senate if I disclosed Senatorial affairs. If you wish to place any statements on file in the matter I can take them."

"I do not wish to do that, and am simply interested in him as a personal friend. I do think, however, that his record as a competent official should entitle him to an early confirmation."

"That is all good, Miss Wayland, and to the point; all that I can say to you is, that Col. Winston will receive no injustice at my hands."

The friends of the two young ladies were soon quietly at work pressing forward Col. Winston's business to an early issue.

In the meantime when each day's weary waiting was over, an irresistible impulse would almost invariably take the Colonel to the side of his dark-eyed friend. He was fast becoming aware that he loved her; and told her so by every token that a man can give, except the five words that Margaret longed to hear, and constantly expected: "Will you be my wife?" Yet in all respects he spoke to her and treated her as though their lives were to be passed together.

On one occasion, he carelessly picked up a letter which was lying on the table, and as he was talking turned the superscription upward, running his eye rapidly over the delicate chirography.

"Is it not a good hand writing?" said Margaret. That is my first letter from the mother whom I have never seen."

"Your mother whom you have never seen," the Colonel repeated in astonishment.

"Yes; you seem surprised, but my father has recently married a most estimable lady, I am told."

"And you care so little about it as to call her mother without having seen her?"

"It is not because I do not care for my father's comfort and happiness. The last time that we met in our western home, father, who has always been domestic in his tastes, and very fond of his home was so restless and uneasy, so desperately lonely, that we whispered to each other, my brother and myself: 'why need this be so? Our father is not an old man, and there might be much happiness in store for him yet, if he marries again.'"

"I dare say he thinks we would oppose it," said my brother.

"Well then, the best thing we can do is to convince him to the contrary," said I.

"How did you do that?" said Col. Winston, with an earnest eagerness, which showed how deeply interested he was becoming in her story.

"O," said she, "we told him just what we thought about it."

"And he took you at your word; did he not think that your love was rather luke-warm to give him up so easily?"

Margaret looked up in wide-eyed surprise, as she ejaculated:

"Give him up! why we have done no such thing; we love him too well to selfishly exact of him a life of loneliness and sorrow, while we claim the privilege of marrying when and whom we please."

A sad expression settled in the grey, earnest eyes of Col. Winston, and running his shapely hand through his hair, he said:

"If my daughter had ever seemed selfish about it, I think I should have gone my own ways with no compunction of conscience, as far as she was concerned; but she is the gentlest of all human creatures."

"Like her father?" said Margaret inquiringly, with a humorous twinkle in her eye.

"Yes, in looks," he answered; but I think she inherited her sweet temper from her mother. I wish you knew her."

"So do I," said Margaret heartily.

In the meantime every effort was being made by Col. Winston's and Margaret's friends to secure the Col.'s confirmation, which had been so unaccountably delayed.

Margaret was greatly pleased one morning to meet Mr. Wills, who said, "I have just been interviewing the Senate Committee, and I think we can feel quite confident that the matter in which we are interested will be reported favorably, and that very soon."

The following Tuesday morning, on meeting her friend Elie in one of the corridors, she was struck by the expression of her face, and said, "You look as though you were dying to tell something; what is it?"

"I am; Col. Winston was confirmed yesterday afternoon."

"How do you know, Elie?"

"Why Senator Williams called, on his way home, to tell me; but said that it would not be made public before this afternoon."

"Does Col. Winston know of it?"

"No, I think not; at least he did not then. Senator Williams said that it had given him great pleasure to hasten action in the case, as he knew my heart was so set upon seeing it accomplished."

"I would like to be the first one to tell him," said Margaret thoughtfully."

"Well, why not?" said her friend. "Send him a note."

The note was soon dispatched; and not long after Margaret reached her rooms that evening, the Col. called to answer her warm congratulations. He seemed ill, and ill at ease, but said, he thought she would think it strange if he did not come and acknowledge his great obligations to her and her friends.

His stay was brief and unsatisfactory, and immediately after returning to his hotel, he was taken violently ill.

Margaret anxiously awaited news from him, and rebelled against the necessity which kept her from his side; but the proprieties must be observed, and she could only wait in silence until chance would bring her news of his condition.

Her faithful friend, Congressman Wills, divining her anxiety, visited the Colonel and made every arrangement for his comfort that was possible; then when she called upon his wife on her way home from business, hoping to hear something from her friend, yet hesitating to ask, Mr. Wills said:

"Miss Wayland, I ran up to see the Colonel to-day; he's pretty sick, that's a fact; but I got some medicine for him, and cheered him up, so that he appeared quite like himself when I left him."

"Did he seem down-hearted? It seems to me that he ought to be in good spirits, now that his work is nearly accomplished. Of course though it is not pleasant to be ill."

"No, I think few of us would enjoy an experience of that kind; but he seems to have something on his mind—I wonder what it is?"

"I could not tell if I knew, and I do not know," she replied, for the remark had taken the inflection of a question.

The Colonel's illness was of short duration, and in a few days he seemed to be quite in his usual health and spirits.

He constantly avoided all attempts to draw him into society, averring that he preferred always, a quiet talk with Miss Wayland to any other way of spending an evening. As he devoted so much of his time to her, she naturally wished to introduce him to some of her friends, and when one evening, before his confirmation, she suggested a visit to Mrs. Dugoin and Mrs. Milton, the wives of two prominent Senators, saying:

"You should not visit Washington, and miss seeing these charming ladies."

He replied: "Miss Wayland, indeed you must excuse me at present. I will give no occasion for people to say that I am courting social influence, by making these calls while my confirmation is pending, but after that is decided, I will be pleased to accompany you on a round of them, if you choose.

In accordance with that promise, the time had now arrived when without compromise of dignity, the calls could be made, and it was arranged that on Thursday the carriage should call for Miss Wayland. The Colonel did not come at the appointed hour, but in due time a special messenger arrived with a note in which Col. Winston expressed his exceeding regret that business of importance, which would occupy him far into the night, made it impossible for him to make the contemplated calls, and moreover his speedy departure would compel him to forego that pleasure entirely.

Margaret was inexpressibly disappointed; and an incidental allusion to his great anxiety to see his daughter, as one of his incentives to haste in his preparations, gave her food for thought. She earnestly felt the incongruity of being placed in a seemingly antagonistic position to this daughter; always feeling that she was placed as a bar between them, even in the Colonel's tenderest moods.

One morning Col. Winston made his appearance at about 8 o'clock at Margaret's rooms.

"You are early, Col. Winston," she said in a questioning tone which he understood, for he immediately explained :

"I cannot always come evenings when I wish to, and my mornings hang heavily on my hands. I am accustomed at home to rising early, and doing a day's work earlier in the day than it would be possible to begin work here."

"Come up then, if you wish to, you are always welcome."

"At what hour do you arise, Miss Wayland?"

"At daylight usually, I find the morning a good time for reading or study." Noticing a worried look on the face she had learned to know so well, Margaret continued, "How do you succeed with your plans?"

"Not as well as I could wish; I have had a most discouraging time at the Treasury Department since I saw you. I have presented arguments enough for Bezoor to accomplish something of much more importance, if arguments were of any value. The acting Secretary admits that it is all right, but I cannot induce him to make the recommendation."

Col. Winston seemed this morning to be in a most unhappy mood; and as Margaret watched his changing countenance, troubled, anxious, and pathetic by turns, she could only think of a little child that needed comforting; but his manner was so dignified, that it made any attempt at proffering consolation impossible.

After a few moments silence he said in a tone of weariness :

"I have been here four weeks longer now than I expected to be. The President has not yet sent for me as he promised to do when I came to the city. I feel the great importance of seeing him, but I cannot force myself upon him after such an engagement as that."

"But, Col. Winston, your reticence in business matters

shows undue modesty. I think other people are not so careful. Every man presses his own business upon the President's notice, and unless you urge yours he will not think of it."

"Well, I will try again," said he, "for I am certainly growing impatient to go home. I wish to see my daughter before going to Bezoer, and the time is limited."

He gave a quick look at Margaret as he spoke; and she thought: "Well, the Colonel's devotion to his daughter is really beautiful, and I wonder if it can be his anxiety to see her which makes him so distraught this morning."

They soon left the house together, Margaret going to the Department, and the Colonel to his business. Before they separated he said: "I am coming up again to-morrow morning."

He did not come however, and Margaret tried to conjecture the whole day what had so changed his usual manner of self-reliant manliness, to one of such deep despondency.

The evening brought him again to her side.

"I could not come this morning," he said, and his voice had something of the usual jovial ring. There seemed a complete revolution in his manner, as though something had happened to decide his future course. He was less cheery than usual, but more self-contained and more serious than she had ever seen him. The clouds seemed to have all rolled away.

The atmosphere of that evening was as though they belonged to each other to all eternity.

"Margaret," said the Colonel, after the manner of men who love to be told again and again, why they are loved; "I certainly am at a loss to know how a lady like you can love a man like me—an unrefined frontiersman."

Margaret here interrupted him with, "That is not true."

He continued: "I am a man of the world."

With a look of surprise in her dark eyes, she said :
 "What do you mean by that?"

"I do not belong to any church."

"Are you trying my faith in you?" she said; "I do not care anything about that, I believe you to be good and true; my observation does not teach me that church members are better husbands than other people."

Again he said quizzically: "I never go in any society."

Had Margaret asked why, he without doubt would have told her truthfully. She simply thought that a very slight matter to stand between them and happiness, and said nothing.

She afterward recalled another occasion when she believed that he had sought to open the way to disclose to her the trouble that was preying on his life; but she did not encourage him because she suspected nothing.

The Colonel seemed to be in a teasing mood this evening, and after a little further conversation suddenly said:

"When you are a wife you can make no more political speeches."

Margaret daringly replied: "When I am a wife I shall make myself so loved, that I shall be indulged in every wish."

"Not in making political speeches, my — Margaret."

The look of tenderness which accompanied this remark, the quick catch of the breath as the possessive "my" escaped his lips, made her heart throb with happiness as she quickly answered with a woman's self abnegation:

"Then I will give it up. I only want to help re-elect the President, and elect you to succeed Hon. William Chambers."

"Then you think you could elect me, do you?"

"Yes, I do."

"I believe you would try, and it is pleasant to see your

eyes flash, with the brave determination to work for me, although the time may never come when you will be called upon to fulfill that promise."

As he said no more about speech-making, Margaret felt called upon to defend herself to a certain extent.

"I am wholly irresponsible," said she, "for being on the platform. My best loved brother insisted upon my going into temperance work at first, much against my will; and it was the effectiveness of my temperance work which involved me in political affairs; so that there seemed no way for me to preserve my self-respect, but to take a public stand for my principles. When my brother came to the National Republican Convention he said, 'I have come to take you home.'"

"'I cannot go,' I replied, 'you are responsible for my being in public work.'"

"'I am certainly not responsible for your being in political work,' said he.

"I soon convinced him that it was the temperance work which had led to this; and that I felt myself to be in the path of duty."

The time was fast approaching when the Colonel must take his departure for the far west; he would not say "good bye," but contented himself with a "good night."

The following evening his first words were, "I have come to say good bye. I have done the hardest day's work I have ever done in Washington. I had an interview with the President, and he promised all I wished. He said he would appoint Z. B. Wexford as my associate official, and I carried the papers between the departments until they were all arranged ready for the President. He even asked me if I had any candidates for the other places, which I had not."

The Colonel seemed to be in the most jubilant spirits,

and Margaret, taking advantage of this, said, "You certainly will not leave the city without calling upon Mrs. Tripp."

She had repeatedly urged him to do this before, as a matter of courtesy. He looked chagrined for a moment, then replied :

"Well, I must go right away then, instead of remaining with you," evidently hoping to be let off, but Margaret insisted, and they together made the long delayed call. Although it seemed so difficult for him to attend to social duties, he thoroughly enjoyed a spirited conversation. As they drove away from the door, he remarked :

"I do like Mrs. Tripp very much, and will always do all that I can to help her retain her position."

After they returned, much was said on both sides, that can only be interesting to dear and intimate friends. The Colonel was so well pleased with the reception by the President, that he made him the chief topic of conversation ; after they had settled upon their future correspondence, and arranged their plans satisfactorily.

In speaking of the President he said :

"I am satisfied that God never made a better man than he is, but at the same time he is difficult to approach ; he is the only man I ever knew whom I cannot talk to. I am not afraid of him, but when I enter his presence my tongue refuses to perform its office and I find myself stammering and blushing like a boy of sixteen. I am proud of him, and glad that I was an original Cleveland man ; but I did not think of him then with reference to ability, so much as availability. I am, however, satisfied now, that he is as extraordinary in his intellectual abilities, as his other qualifications."

At last the good-byes were said, pledges to write were interchanged, and promises to dispense with ceremony as to their order,—and he was gone.

CHAPTER XII

AT MARIANNA.

After Col. Winston's departure Margaret felt that the dull monotony of her life must be relieved by incessant action; and she immediately set herself to work for the Colonel's interests.

Congressman Wills, who had learned to like Col. Winston, espoused his cause with much zeal; taking charge of two important Bezoor matters, which were meeting with strenuous opposition from the representatives of rings in Bezoor, who, naturally, hated the man who would not join them for his own selfish interests, but insisted upon legislation for the people.

Mr. Wills succeeded in obtaining a favorable report from the committee in one case, but could not secure Congressional action upon it during the present session. The time of adjournment was very near, and time was pressing.

He made a vigorous speech before the Senate Committee in behalf of the other matter, and spoke twice in the House for its interests. Through his eloquence and the justice of his cause, he came off triumphant; although he met with bitter opposition from those with whom the ring representatives of Bezoor had conferred and convinced.

It was a source of great pleasure to Margaret to communicate these two items of good news to Col. Winston at Marianna.

Before his departure he had asked her to see the Chairman of the Appropriation Committee, and press forward a matter which came under their action.

She lost no time in complying with this request, and found that, under the new rules, such legislation could not be attached to appropriation bills; but the Chairman kindly referred her to the proper committee.

She immediately repaired to this committee, the Chairman of which curtly replied to her appeal:

"I would not know how to draft such a bill, Miss Wayland; and in any case it would be impossible to get a bill through at so late an hour."

Margaret was indignant that this man should treat her with so little consideration, and that he dared to make such a statement of his own inability. He evidently belonged to that class of men who think that women can comprehend nothing serious or business-like; and he hoped to put her off by prevarication and assumption of carelessness and ignorance. Had the charge of incompetence been made by another, he would have refuted it as a calumny; but he did not choose to answer an honest question, in a straightforward manner, because a woman had the temerity to approach him on the subject.

He had served several terms in Congress, and knew that no woman's *vote* had ever assisted him to secure the coveted position; forgetting the power behind the throne, which has so often incited to tyranny, overthrown a party, and changed a dynasty in the history of the past.

Margaret looked with incredulous surprise at Mr. Shaver as he made the unreasonable statement; and wondered how long a man would have to serve his constituents in Congress before he would know how to draft a bill. Without a word she bowed quietly to the great man's fiat, and left his presence, too indignant to trust herself in speech.

She did not wish to ask another favor of Mr. Wills, in addition to all he had been doing, and feeling her inability to accomplish what she desired, said to herself:

"I will go up to East Capitol street and talk it all over with Donna Inez; she almost always suggests the right measures."

In this mood she visited her friend, and after relating her experience with the Chairman of the committee she wished to reach, she unhesitatingly denounced the demoralization of modern politics; the dearth of statesmen, and the depravity of politicians; when Inez interrupted her with:

"I have a friend on that committee, Congressman Garmoil, who has done good service for Mr. Shaver, and if I can interest him, I think perhaps the latter gentleman can be induced to learn how to draft a bill for this very purpose."

"When will you see him?" said Margaret.

"Immediately. I think it can be done."

It was done, and Mr. Garmoil said pleasantly: "If you young ladies will do the outside work, for which my time is too limited, I will draft the bill and have it referred to a sub-committee of which I will be chairman, and thus empowered to push it right through."

This disposed of, another matter came up for adjustment. One of Col. Winston's first letters to Margaret referred to the President's promise to him, to appoint Z. B. Wexford as an associate official at Bezoor; and after dilating upon its desirability he said:

"If convenient, I would esteem it a great personal favor if you would call upon the Secretary of the Interior and press the appointment; at the same time I would prefer not to have you approach the President on the subject."

Margaret soon ascertained that the appointment was beyond the reach of the Department, and in the President's hands; she reported to the Colonel the condition of the case. She assured him that there was no alternative; that the Cabinet Ministers would not urge the President when a case had been endorsed and agreed upon between them, and that

she was confident she could present the matter acceptably to this high authority.

In the meantime Mr. Garmoil called for the official records of the matter which he was to undertake, and Miss Wayland, in compliance with the promise she had made to do all the outside work, visited the First Comptroller, and asked him for the necessary papers.

He replied: "I had quite forgotten about the new rules when I prepared the new records in the case for the Appropriation Committee, and if you cannot procure it from them I will of course make them out again.

She secured the papers without trouble, prepared an informal history of the case, and handed them in to Mr. Garmoil in due season.

The bill was accordingly introduced on the following Monday.

When Col. Winston replied to Miss Wayland's letter he said: "The reason I do not wish you to go to the President is this, and this only, that it may look as though I doubted his redeeming his promise to me. I would much rather it would wait, than to seem to imply anything of that kind."

Margaret immediately answered this letter, expostulating with her friend for his excessive modesty, as unusual as it was uncalled for, in this official business. She said:

"If a Republican had such a matter in hand, and any lady espoused his cause, to whom the etiquette between the President and the Cabinet Ministers was known, she would press it through either by letter or personal interview.

"One man's personality is 'out of sight out of mind,' to these busy public servants pushed by fifty million people; until some friend, or some circumstance again bring him to mind."

To this she added that she was willing to serve his cause,

and if the public interests demanded the appointment, it justified pressing it.

She did not wish him to ask her to see the President, because she would then feel obliged to acknowledge that he had done so; but if he would put the case without restriction the way would be clear.

Col. Winston answered this letter as she desired, giving a statement of the condition which made a change necessary for the public interests; and expressing his own anxiety that Wexford should accompany him on his return trip to Bezoor.

Miss Wayland communicated with the President, who busy as he was at this time, just on the eve of leaving for his summer vacation, read the Colonel's letter and said he would consider it as soon as the pressure upon him would allow.

Everything seemed in a fair way to move on smoothly, when like a thunderbolt from a clear sky came the news of Col. Winston's sudden marriage.

CHAPTER XIII.

INVESTIGATING THE MARRIAGE.

The effect upon Margaret of this sudden news was distressing, both physically and mentally; her friends became alarmed for her life or reason.

Powerful remedies were resorted to, but her nerves were in such an unsettled condition that she talked incessantly. Her friend Elie said on Sunday morning:

"Come to church, Margaret, you will get some comfort; at least it will be quiet."

It was not in Margaret's nature to be disobliging, and she accordingly assented to the proposal; but before the closing of the preliminary exercises she became so restless that remaining in her seat was an impossibility; she therefore returned to her friend's house.

Mrs. Tripp observed her extreme nervousness, her inability to keep quiet for one moment, and her insistence that there must be some mistake about it, until a happy thought struck her:

"Margaret," she said, "suppose I write to Justice Firebrand and ask for a local paper giving the details of this marriage."

Elie had no idea that anything would come of this application, but she saw that the forced inaction was killing Margaret, and if she could have something to watch and wait for, it would steady her nerve and brain. The letter was written, and only a few days elapsed before the following reply was received:

HEMPHILL, ILL., July 31.

MRS. ELIE TRIPP, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Dear Madam—Yours of recent date at hand. I have no local paper giving the account asked for. Rev. J. Wilber, McAnglely, Ill., married them on Monday, July 20, in presence of Mrs. James Kirkley and Mrs. Thomas DeKalb, both of Hemphill, at the home of the former lady where Mrs. W. still remains.

Very respectfully,

Z. B. FIREBRAND.

Mrs. Tripp entered Margaret's room one morning, and throwing the letter in her lap, said :

"I am convinced now that there is some unexplained mystery about this marriage; I have thought up to this time that there might be some mistake in the newspaper report."

"I know there is mystery," Margaret replied, and running her eyes rapidly over the letter, she crushed it in her hand, and between shut teeth she said :

"Ralph Winston never would have done that voluntarily."

"I have, I confess, thought him a villain unworthy of a single thought from you," said Elie, "for if ever a man looked love for any woman, he has for you, so unmistakably as to be noticeable whenever you were together."

Margaret had a theory, in her own mind, of the causes which had led to this marriage, but she could not yet explain it to her friend.

A former acquaintance of Miss Wayland's, Gen. Jones of Chicago, was much of Elie's opinion, for upon reading the announcement of the marriage, knowing the relations that existed between Ralph Winston and Miss Wayland, he immediately enclosed the clipping in a letter, giving his opinion of the man who could so trifle with a true woman's love, and ending with "perhaps now you will acknowledge that a true friend is better than a false lover."

Margaret sent on at once the telegram of the *Ventilator*, which had so startled her; and stated her fears as to the facts in the case, while she earnestly begged him to believe that she fully appreciated his years of devoted friendship, but her heart, woman-like, had found that life held something sweeter, dearer, than even a long-trying and true friendship like his.

He replied to this letter by offering to assist her in any way she desired, to ascertain the facts; but still thought that the best course of action for her was, to banish the unworthy lover from her thoughts and heart.

Margaret's unhappy face and nervous condition so wrought upon her friend Elie that she suggested another method of inquiry, hoping that certainty in any case would bring peace and quiet to her restless friend. She therefore wrote a letter to the postmaster at Hemphill asking for details of the marriage, disclaiming any personal interest in the Colonel, but acknowledging that a very dear friend, believing him to be the very soul of honor, insisted that there must be some explanation of this sudden marriage, which would clear him from the charge of dishonesty.

Soon after Margaret's letter to the President she received one from Col. Winston, enroute to Bezoor, in which he expressed his heartfelt thanks for her efforts in his behalf, and through him for Bezoor. He sincerely hoped that she would not think him lacking in appreciation, and if she should find herself included in the substantial testimonials which the people of Bezoor would certainly offer to those who had labored in their interests, he begged that she would not be offended, but credit it to the partiality of a friend, and indulge him in the pleasure of hearing from her at Bezoor.

Not a word of his marriage, not a hint of any change in his feelings; not a thought of the agony which he must have

known she was enduring. The deliberate coolness of the man's language; the purely business basis which he gave to their relations, maddened and drove Margaret to take a stand in defence of her outraged love and trust.

She answered the letter in this spirit, feeling that she must speak or die:

WASHINGTON, D. C.

COL. RALPH WINSTON :—

Yours of recent date is before me. I do not care for testimonials. I have not worked for that purpose. I have drawn to the fullest extent upon the strongest friendships of my life, I have secured for you the best Democratic and Republican influence that could be obtained in Washington, and I have done all that any woman could do, to insure success to your undertakings.

Why have I done it? Because I had the same faith in you which I gave to you. I believed you the soul of honor. I loved you from the first, but when I heard the rumor of your intended marriage, I determined to know the truth before I permitted my heart to go out of my own keeping. I asked you if the report was true, and you assured me of its falsehood; I believed you as I always have.

I no more believed that you could trifle with the love of a true woman, than that my mother in Heaven could forget her child. I cannot explain to you the condition of my mind, or health since this blow has fallen.

There will have to be a great deal of brightness in your life, to offset that which has forever gone out of mine.

I am sure you will not misinterpret the motives which prompted the letter to the President, of which I enclose a copy.

If God, who in his inscrutable providence, will allow me no happiness here, will take me home, I will be content, for life now holds nothing for me,—my heart is broken.

Sincerely,

MARGARET WAYLAND.

This done, wonderment began as to whether the letters would go on the same steamer with the Colonel to Bezoer. When suspense could be endured no longer, Margaret determined to ascertain something about the frequency of the mails to that far-off territory. Upon application to the

Second Assistant Post-Master General, he informed her that the Post-Master General had declined to grant the petition for semi-monthly mails, so that Bezoor had but one mail per month, still.

The schedule time of the mail steamer was :

Leaves Point Picket for Bezoor :

July 31.

Aug. 30.

Sept. 27.

Time between Washington and Point Picket not less than eight days.

The only hope was that the steamer did not leave on schedule time, which could be ascertained by writing the Post-Master at Point Picket. The answer came in due time stating that the steamer had gone three days ahead of schedule time; the Post Office Department having ordered that it leave immediately upon the arrival of the steamer from St. Janetio. This settled the matter that Col. Winston could receive none of his letters before September.

Margaret's anxiety and restlessness took on different forms; sometimes she was indignant, and sometimes her whole heart was filled with a tender compassion for the man whom she still believed to be the victim of circumstances beyond his control. Three weeks after the letter from the Post-Master at Hemphill was due, she became settled in her convictions that if all had been right, a speedy answer would have followed; and yielding to these convictions she determined to write to Col. Winston and tell him that notwithstanding his errors he still held a warm place in her generous heart. A man, with his mind a prey to such conflicting emotions, would have resorted to drink or other dissipations, but Margaret, uneasy, restless, unhappy, turned to her pen, and voiced her pitying sorrow in this letter :

COL. RALPH WINSTON:—

My Dear Friend:—If you were fortunate and happy I would let you go your ways, without a word ; but misfortune calls for sympathy and tenderness. You will never know how my heart aches for you ; but you must know and feel that the woman who writes this entertains an exalted opinion of your true worth as a man and gentleman.

Pardon me, then, if I could not rest until I knew what strange pressure of circumstances had compelled you to take the irrevocable step which either brands you as false to the heart's core, or the unhappy victim of an unhallowed liason.

As soon as I learned the facts, I wrote the President that I had a clue to this strange marriage, and I begged him to withhold an adverse judgment, for I believed you to be more sinned against than sinning.

I assure you that it is the general belief here that you do not intend to live with the woman who has tried to ruin your life by this forced marriage. I beg of you, for your own sake, as soon as the election interests of your party will admit, to sever your connection with her.

If my informant is correct, she is not a fit wife for one whose sterling manhood is recognized by all who know him. Do not permit your life to be ruined and darkened by a false woman. Was this the explanation of your despondency, of your fitful tenderness, of your sad hopelessness, when the pathos of your voice was like an ocean of unshed tears?

Why did you not trust the sympathetic, charitable woman who would have done or faced anything for you, but sin,—for she trusted you. How far back does this woman's influence extend ? I ask for the plain truth, I think you owe it to me in every detail, as you would acknowledge it to your own soul.

Although my heart is crushed, my earnest heart-felt sympathy is with you, and I am still your true friend.

When will you reach Washington ? Do you come before visiting Illinois ? I would like one personal interview with you before we part forever. You surely cannot fear to meet me.

Sincerely,

MARGARET WAYLAND.

In the meantime Margaret was not idle, she was always at her desk during departmental hours, performing every duty with scrupulous exactness, while her dark eyes grew larger, and the bright flush on either cheek, gave her beauty a strange brilliancy, which caused her friends to remark :

"What has come over Margaret Wayland? She is positively magnificent."

* * * * *

"As I live, I have not seen a person at work in one of the rooms which I have passed, and you are reading." The speaker was Margaret's Spanish friend, Donna Inez, who came in this morning like a spring breeze, her musical voice sounding sweet and clear as running water.

Margaret looked up with a smile of welcome and said:

"I have the largest section of work in the Division, and I have finished for the quarter more than a week ago. I can work, or play now, as I please."

"Where are the people who belong at these other desks?"

"Gone on annual leave."

"Margaret, I have just been to see Gen. Donalbain about Rebecca's appointment, and what do you think they want now?"

"I really cannot imagine."

"They want me to give my influence for the appointment of their friend to a position commanding a salary of \$840, while they give Rebecca a place at \$720. I have their promise for an even exchange, and now they make this selfish proposition, ignoring all their pledges and all the endorsements you furnished, to say nothing of what you have done for the party."

Margaret had listened with an amused smile, to her friend's indignant protest, and when she reached the last clause, said with a little laugh:

"I am only one of many, my dear, what I have done for the party of course counts nothing; I have my own place, which is better than one in a hundred of the party can get. The situation is quite unlike the Republican condition of things, where men have been rotating in office for

a quarter of a century. With the present administration, the whole party have equal claims, and he who is fortunate enough to secure a position for himself, can rightfully claim no more.

"But this is a matter of honor, after having made the promise. I cannot see how a man with Gen. Donalbain's reputation for integrity can afford to break his plighted word. I have never known him personally, until I met him in Washington, but people whom I know in Illinois, say that he is always responsible for all that he engages to perform. He will probably say that he promised because it would please you, or to escape importunity, but refusal at first, would have been more manly.

"When I go to the Commissioner of Pensions or the Sixth Auditor on such business, they treat me with sincerity, and tell me the truth whether it is favorable to my case or not. These people are autocrats, of course, perhaps they are obliged to be; I notice that when they wish to detail any one from the Treasury Department to another office, it is done, and that is all there is of it, no 'inducements' or remonstrances are of any avail."

"O, dear," said Inez, impatiently, "I wish Col. Winston held that position, I think he is worth two of Gen. Donalbain."

"Margaret's face had been rapidly changing color, as that name was mentioned, but she said quietly:

"I have thought so, Illinois has only a few Democrats who can compete with him," and knitting her brows, she thought, "dare I tell her?" then in a low voice added

"Inez, dear, I have wanted to tell you something a long time, but have not dared lest your Spanish vindictiveness should do the man some harm. Promise me not to interfere and I will tell you now."

"I promise certainly, but if it is the trouble which has been haunting your eyes so long, it will be a severe trial of my national characteristic."

Clear, brief, and without circumlocution, came the answer :

"Col. Winston is married."

"Margaret, my dear friend, this then is your secret sorrow," and the dark eyes of Inez, were bent in tender compassion on her friend's face, then with an indignant flash in their clear depths, she exclaimed, "His bill shall never go through if I can help it."

"That is just what I feared, Inez, and you promised not to be unkind," said Margaret deprecatingly.

"Well, if you want it to pass, I will do nothing against it, but how you can be so forgiving I can not comprehend."

"I certainly do wish it to pass, I would not stoop to revenge myself in that way; 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.' You smile, Inez, I know you do not profess to believe some things which I do."

"I? indeed, no, I do not believe in God or Devil, Heaven or Hell. I do not believe that I am sitting here, I do not believe in anything. I have not an atom of faith in any living man or woman. I love all the dear innocent children and that is all of earth that has any interest for me."

"I can hardly believe that, when you take so deep an interest in all that can benefit your friends; I believe even now you would gladly defend my cause."

"You are right, Margaret, I would; but I would handle the man without gloves; he should understand that trifling with a woman's best affections was a dangerous pastime."

"What would you do?" said Margaret, while her sad eyes rested on her friend's face. "I am afraid you would

adopt some dangerous measures if your Spanish blood was up."

"Probably, we hot-blooded Southerners do our work well, and take the consequences.

"Let me tell you a story of a friend of mine—Spanish of course. She met one winter a gentleman from New England, young, handsome, fascinating; they were mutually attracted, and, before many weeks were passed, desperately in love with each other. He sought her society at every opportunity; he made no secret of his love for her, and she returned it with all the warmth of her passionate nature.

"She was beautiful, wealthy, of a good family; there seemed no reason why there should not be a new and favorable version of the 'course of true love.' Yet he did not propose in due form; rumors reached Adelia that he was already engaged, and she determined to ascertain the truth or falsity by writing to his alleged fiancée. The lady immediately replied in the affirmative. Other information also reached Adelia to the effect that a written contract between the parties would compel him to redeem his plighted word. Adelia's fiery nature was roused to passionate frenzy, and hardly knowing what she did, but panting for revenge on her dastardly lover, seized a stiletto, sought the man at his hotel, confronted him with the letter she had received from his fiancée, and while he was summoning words with which to reply to her accusations, quick as lightning her white hand flashed above his heart, and but for his sudden movement would have sheathed itself home. He was fearfully wounded, and under a surgeon's care for months. I saw him years after his marriage.

"'Well, Robert,' I said, 'you look as well as ever; loss of blood did not spoil your beauty.'

"A look of pain settled on his handsome face. 'Don't mention it,' said he, 'is Adelia still living?'

"'Yes.'

"'Is she married?'

"'No; never will be, probably.'

"'Gods, how I loved her; I would have died for her, even if she did revenge herself so fearfully; I never blamed her.'

"'Do you love her still?'

"'I have never loved another; I shall die loving her. One day of my life with her would be worth a life-time with any other woman.'

"This is the way we Spaniards love and hate; but tell me all about Col. Winston, Margaret."

"I have just received this letter from Gen. Jones of Chicago, shall I read it for you?"

"Yes, I am curious to know all that you have learned about this affair."

Margaret opened the letter which was lying on her desk and read:

"I have ascertained a little more about the Winston marriage. My informant comes from the northern part of the State, and says that the current report there is this; the woman in the case came to that section soon after her first marriage and there met Col. Winston, with whom she began a spirited flirtation; this led to a separation from her husband, and a continuation of the relations between her and Col. Winston until his departure for Bezoar. Everyone who was cognizant of the facts in the case, expressed great astonishment at the marriage; and it is believed that she must have brought some extraordinary sudden pressure to bear upon the gentleman to bring it about."

The dark eyes of Inez flashed with indignation, while

pity, surprise, and tenderness welled up in her heart for her friend, and shone in her bright eyes as she said :

"I am heartily sorry for you, that you should love such a villain."

"But I do love him Inez, and I cannot give him up. What right has she to bear his name,—to stand where an honest woman might be proud to take her place before the world."

"Why, Margaret if he has wronged her, he is no better than she."

"But I am sure he has not; he has been inveigled into this, and he shall not be ruined by her; I will help him to take care of her if necessary; but she shall not ruin the life of the man whom I love and who loves me. The woman does not live with whom he could be tempted to sin again. I shall always believe she was the aggressor."

"Margaret, my friend, be wise, do not allow your own life to be wrecked by this unhappy attachment. You think the woman the guilty party, I doubt it; women do not usually take the initiative in these matters."

"I think this one has; my heart is steeled against her, and I would show her no mercy."

"What did you say her name was before her first marriage?"

"Maggie Diggs."

"How strange; do you suppose there could be another? There was a Maggie Diggs who was a rider on bare-back in James Wilkinson's circus, at New Orleans a dozen years ago. She was the prettiest little creature you ever saw, but a tiger in disposition. She was an Illinois girl, and married a Chicago man, I think his name was Harker, I have seen her go through three burning hoops dressed in tights, and the most inflammable tinselry, without injuring herself. She

was considered quite a decent girl I believe, notwithstanding her occupation. A son of one of our wealthy residents became so infatuated with her that they had to lock him up to prevent him from joining the circus."

"Well, that is a new phase of the subject," said Margaret, "I will write to my friend asking him to make some inquiries."

As Inez turned to go, looking upon Margaret compassionately, she said :

"I am sorry for you and if I can do anything to help you, you can always command me, though you know how absurd I think it is for any one to suffer as you do for anything but the loss of children."

"Every heart knows its own sorrow, Inez, and that happened to be yours. You have always had my warmest sympathy, but if there is any sorrow more intense than that I suffer, Heaven forbid that I should ever experience it."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE QUESTION OF DIVORCE.

Margaret had so long been doing and thinking for others that her first moment's leisure was seized to advance the interests of her friend Inez, or rather her friend's friend; and two days after her last conversation on the subject of Rebecca's appointment, she rang the door bell on East Capitol street, and was admitted by Inez herself.

"I have just been to see Gen. Donalbain," said Margaret, "and it seems to me that you have misunderstood him; he says he would like to make the appointment, and I think he will. The delay is, no doubt, tedious, but large bodies move slowly; and these departments are certainly large, and so extended in detail that it takes time to adjust them to any change. I think, however, that Rebecca will come out all right."

Margaret's bright cheeks and luminous eyes, with her quick, restless manner, impressed Inez with a sense of her unhappy condition of mind, and she said:

"By the way, Margaret, what do you propose to do about Col. Winston's marriage?"

"I? What can I do? The marriage is an accomplished fact, but if we have heard the truth about it, I do not suppose that he will ever live with her; and if he returns to me, I will do all I can, God helping me, to save his life from irremediable ruin."

"But, Margaret, you surely would not marry him now if he was free? You would not marry a divorced man, would you?"

"Why not, if I loved him?"

"But the Bible teaches that divorce is a sin," said Inez, with flashing eyes, forgetting in her eagerness to prove her opinions that in her last conversation with Margaret she had repudiated all belief in the Scriptures.

"Inez," said Margaret solemnly, "when I consult my Bible I try to take it as a whole, both letter and spirit, and not in detached portions. There is nothing in the Bible to sanction the married relation, if not contracted in accordance with the laws of God. I have no sympathy with the popular religious war against divorces. There can never be anything rational about it until they attack the cause, and make home and church teachings conform to the law of right.

"No one can believe more earnestly in the majesty of the law than I do, or in the necessity of legal ceremonies; but I question seriously whether the legal ceremony alone can constitute Bible marriage, when the relation lacks every other element of true marriage. I do not believe the divorce law could separate any man and woman whom God had joined together; but it is because the world, the flesh, and the devil join so many lives that a divorce law is necessary. Moreover, if there is any legal power which can create a relation that ruins a whole valuable life, the same power ought to be able to annul it."

"Well," laughed Inez, "I don't think it right yet, although you seem to have beaten me on my own ground. The fact is, that every one quotes Bible to justify all they want to do, and all they do not want to do, and I fell into the same snare. To tell the truth, I don't believe that God or the Bible, has much to do with our little every day affairs, although they may regulate the laws that govern the universe. Some one has said: 'we are all simply animals,

some of us a little nicer animals than others, but that is all,' and I am inclined to agree with him."

Margaret left the house of her friend with an absolutely new idea in her head; in all her dazed and unhappy condition of mind, she had never formulated a course of action, which would definitely adjust the relations between Col. Winston and herself satisfactorily, until Inez forced her to express herself, when to her own surprise, she found that she was prepared to accept the position that Inez thought impossible; nay more, she was eager to champion Col. Winston's cause in procuring a divorce.

Her thoughts now seemed to seek a new channel, and waking or sleeping she passed through imaginary conversations, which impressed her like actual facts.

Speaking with her friend Elie one morning, she said: "I seem to live lately in two worlds, one which embraces my waking hours, and the other beyond the gateway of sleep,—last night, however, my vision was only a little shifting of the scene, not a transition from one world to another, but a continuation of the thought which haunts me here. Col. Winston stood by my side pale as death, and with a depreciating look, said: 'Margaret, do not look so reproachfully at me, I did not mean to hurt you, but I was forced, through the consequences of my own folly, to save my party from scandal in this campaign, and thus sacrifice myself and you.'

"'But, Ralph Winston,' said I, 'do you not think it would have been more honorable to have told me all. If you had trusted me, I am sure something could have been done to have made this sacrifice unnecessary. I would have been true to your interests and we might have been saved all this bitter suffering, which has been worse than death.'

"'You dear girl,' he said with a world of tenderness in

his voice, 'your letter was kind; but I feel now how sweet forgiveness can be.'

"He made a step toward me, but I retreated grasping the back of the chair to steady myself, and in as cool a voice as I could command, said:

"How long will it take you to free yourself?"

"All next year,' he answered with a flushing cheek, 'and cost all we are both worth.'

"Thank you for including me,' said I 'I will not fail you.'

"All this seemed as real as though the conversation actually occurred, but the surroundings had all the incongruities which usually accompany dreams."

"Margaret," said Elie, "I believe you are growing superstitious, for you seem to think that this dream means something."

"I do, and I am by no means the first one who has believed in these foreshadowings."

"I suppose it must be nearly time to look for an answer to our letters."

"Yes," said Margaret, "the mail steamer lies at Bezoer twenty-four hours. It is nine days I think, from Bezoer to Point Picket, and eight days from there to Washington. I shall look for a letter about September 25."

"By the way," said Elie, Maj. Brown called a few days ago, and while here said:

"What is the meaning of Col. Winston's sudden marriage? Miss Wayland looks wretchedly, and I believe she loved the man."

"She had reason to believe that he loved her at least,' said I, 'for it was impossible for him to disguise his sentiments toward her; I have seen them together often, and remarked his devotion.'

"I wonder if the man was engaged, if he was, his con-

duct toward her was villainous; and the loss is his, for Miss Wayland would make a noble wife.'"

Margaret made no reply. But looking thoughtfully at her friend said: "When do you leave for your vacation?"

"Late in September, and I hope you will let me know if you receive any letters from Bezoor."

"I will do so, and shall probably hear soon, unless Col. Winston was absent when the August mail steamer reached Bezoor. I see by the Marianna paper, which I receive through his courtesy, that he has been absent on official business, and he may not have returned in time to reply by return mail."

Margaret's life at this time seemed half a dream life, self-absorbed, indrawn, and unobservant; doing her duty mechanically and thoroughly, but without the bright energy and earnestness, which had always been her most distinguishing characteristics. Through her profession, and political work, she had made many friends among prominent Democrats, and was particularly interested in the appointment of S. M. Crawford, a western politician, to a position of trust. Among the rejections of the Senate in its closing hours was the name of this friend.

Margaret had worked through friends many months, to secure this confirmation. It had been one of the most maliciously contested cases which had ever appeared before the Senate.

Forty-eight hours before the rejection it had been authoritatively stated that every charge was fully answered and there was nothing in the way of favorable action.

Suddenly the result became doubtful; (Mr. Crawford had been told that no action would be taken in his case during the present session, and had returned to his home); and Margaret ascertained that this treacherous information

had been given to clear the field for the opposition, and thereby defeat the party in the state in the fall elections.

Having come quietly by this knowledge, she earnestly desired to put the President in possession of the details as far as she knew them, and lost no time in visiting the Executive Mansion.

"Col. Strong," said she, "I suppose it will be nearly impossible to see the President at this time. But I have some important facts which I wish to communicate to him, either in person or on paper at once, how can it be done?"

"You can write the facts, and if I cannot secure an interview, I will deliver the card," he answered.

Margaret prepared the card and handed it to Col. Strong who said quizzically, as he tried to decipher it:

"I cannot read that, now please write something that the President can read. What is the matter with you Miss Wayland?" the Col. asked, as he watched her trembling hand while she wrote the second card.

"Oh, I am all right, only a little troubled about this confirmation, which I find I have set my heart upon more than I had supposed, and I am in a state of nervous indignation, over the duplicity of political intrigue."

Col. Strong looked her squarely in the face and smiling kindly, said:

"Miss Wayland you cannot deceive me, this is not a political matter, and let me warn you that at the rate you are going on you will be in your grave in thirty days."

"That would not grieve me, Col. Strong, life is not so sweet that I crave its long continuance."

"It is downright wickedness for you to talk in that way, Miss Wayland; and you must come out of this morbid condition, it is becoming noticable. I saw you walking up the street the other day with head down, thinking as intently as though the weal or woe of the universe depended

upon you, and wholly oblivious of any obstruction in your pathway; people, dogs, tree-boxes were alike unnoticed, and sudden collisions with either, elicited only a slight deviation in your movements."

Margaret laughed lightly at this picture of herself, and thanking Col. Strong for his kind advice and interest, she took her departure.

She did not often exhibit so much of her unusual condition as she had this morning; and as she walked down Pennsylvania avenue to the 14th street junction she said to herself:

"This will not do, I must be mistress of myself; Col. Strong is right; I have been too pre-occupied with my own thoughts," and she remembered that little incidents were constantly occurring to attract attention to her unusual manner.

She passed her friends without a look or word—she invariably forgot her car transfer; and if she went shopping, her change; but continued her work faithfully.

For many weeks after Col. Winston's marriage, she went to the Department two hours ahead of time, and in seven weeks completed a quarter's work. Her associates looked upon her with astonishment and said:

"Miss Wayland is working herself to death, I wonder if she thinks she will get promotion any sooner by overwork."

Her friend Elie, who was ever lovingly mindful of her interests, would remonstrate with her daily, but it was of no avail, Margaret's invariable reply being:

"This work is my salvation, what would become of me without it? I cannot be quiet, and am glad to have this to do."

Margaret and Elie, after the fashion of Washington people, lunched on the contents of paper bags; sometimes little relishes from the nearest restaurant, oftener dainty

delicacies from the home table; but always in room 55, where Elie made a cup of tea or cocoa over the gas jet, and the two friends meanwhile exchanged confidences, or enjoyed a cozy chat uninterruptedly.

One day in the course of conversation the name of Col. Winston was mentioned, and Elie remarked:

"I would like to see how his wife looks wouldn't you? I wish we had her picture."

"I do not care to see her," said Margaret; "what does it matter to me how she looks?"

"Have you no curiosity?"

"Not about her, it is enough to believe her a designing woman; no, I hope I shall never see her."

"If he was so completely in her power, as to be compelled to marry her, he is no better than she is," said Elie.

"I do not think so," answered Margaret with decision.

"Margaret Wayland it is unworthy of you to ignore the Bible standard of morals, which is the same for a man as a woman."

"I do not; but suppose I know a person possessed of a violent temper, which can be roused to ungovernable fury; and I provoke that person to madness until he commits a crime; am I not more responsible for that crime than he? Then if a woman artfully arouses all the strongest passions of a man's nature until he is led into sin, is she not responsible for the sins of both? I think she is, and that she should expect to go before the bar of eternal justice to answer for both."

"But I think," said Elie "that men are stronger than women and should be helps, not hindrances to the 'weaker sex.'"

"Men are stronger physically, but not morally, and there is nothing to make them so. They are taught from childhood that 'boys will be boys,' that they can never become

men until they have sown their wild oats; while on the contrary everybody insists that a woman must be pure. Now in the face of this fact, there is nothing to hold a man up to a standard of perfect morals while a woman has everything, there is some excuse for the errors of men, and no excuse for the women."

"I do not believe that a man should be exonerated from all blame, simply because he has never exercised self-control,—I think they are equally guilty," said Elie earnestly.

"Elie, do you think that a woman who would deliberately wrong the husband with whom she was living, by becoming on intimate relations with another is entitled to any other woman's charity? Are you willing that the standard of morals for your sex shall be lowered to the level of the standard for men, to equalize things?"

"No, but Margaret, I would bring the standard for men up to that of women; and beside, I think a woman's charity should be extended to her own sex, and that she should look as far for extenuating circumstances for the woman, as the man. You lay great stress upon love, perhaps, she did not love her husband."

"Perhaps she did not love her husband," repeated Margaret, thoughtfully. "Then she should never have married him." For a moment she seemed overpowered with thought, then as if inspired she added: "God will never bless any woman, who has deliberately disgraced the name bestowed upon her by the man she has promised to love and honor, and to whom she is united by the authority of both church and state."

"And if she loves the other man?" asked Elie.

"No woman ever loved a man who would be his partner in sin," answered Margaret in a quick impressive manner.

Then in a voice subdued to sadness she said: "It is a

woman's mission to elevate and uplift the man she loves, not to drag him down, and the woman who truly loves will never lose sight of this principle.

"It is not uncommon to meet women who do not love their husbands; who possibly love someone who is not their husband, yet they accept their lot, and do their duty in it, knowing that no blessing can attend on neglected duty, or sinful marital unfaithfulness."

"What should make such a condition of things?" said Elie, rising to replenish her friend's cup.

"The causes are various," Margaret replied; "I can give you one of many:—One day when I was doing reform work on the frontier, I fell into conversation with a man of striking appearance on the train,—there is no conventionality on railroad trains in the west,—we talked of the frontier and things of general interest, until I discovered that he lived where I was to speak that evening.

"I began to question him about the temperance status of the town, and he talked as interestedly, to all appearance, as the most active christian worker could have done, until we neared our journey's end when he said hesitatingly:

"'Madam, I should be glad to escort you to the hotel and extend to you the courtesy due you as a lady who has come to do us good, but it is impossible. My reputation is such that to be seen with me would ruin you, and your work irretrievably.'

"'What do you mean, sir?' I said, expressing, no doubt, by looks and gesture my utter amazement; through all of which he must have read infinite compassion, for there, on that railroad train, he hastily outlined the story of a ruined life.

"He was married at nineteen to a young lady through the influence of friends of the contracting parties, with little reference to the wishes of the two people whose lives

were thus joined for weal or woe forever. Trouble soon began through incompatibility of temper, recrimination followed, and life became a burden too heavy to be borne patiently. The descent was rapid; to drown thought and kill time, from a respectable clergyman, he had fallen to the avocation of a liquor seller, a drunkard, a gambler, and a libertine; had made fortunes in a week and sunk them in less time, and now stood a living commentary on unsuitable marriages.

"Young people are taught that, if they are equal in social position and unexceptional in morals and religion, they may safely marry, and trust to the love to come afterwards; but, as a rule, it never comes, and one, or both, find too late that they are held in bonds which forever precludes the possibility of a loving union with their heart's choice. Still, in face of the fact, the 'divorce reform' people claim that divorce laws lead to immorality, when it is improper marriages instead, and the difficulties of undoing them."

"Your argument seems unanswerable, Margaret, yet I am not convinced," said Elie as she gathered the crumbs of her lunch in the napkin which she had spread across her lap, while Margaret arose, and walking to the window, looked dreamily out on the summer sunshine.

Elie continued, "you do then really think that you hate Mrs. Winston."

"Hate her?" said Margaret with flashing eyes; "do not speak of her."

"But, Margaret, your sentiments toward this particular woman are wholly unlike you."

"I admit it. Do you want to know why?" she answered with set teeth.

"Yes."

"It is because strikes are the fashion, and I have struck for Margaret Wayland for the first time in my life. I have

just come to the conclusion that possibly on the last day the good Lord will hold me responsible for her happiness and usefulness, instead of the rest of the world. If I have shown more sympathy for Col. Winston than myself in this trouble, it is in accordance with the law of love, which is always self-sacrificing. I certainly have no sympathy for the woman who has darkened the life of the man I love, and well nigh made shipwreck of mine. If she came to me in tears, I would turn from her in scorn."

"Margaret," said Elie, "you could not be so heartless if you tried."

"I never was but once," she said, smiling at the remembrance, "it was when I first began temperance work. A man of our town who was one of the most brilliant and eloquent men whom the State of Michigan ever produced, but without a vestige of moral principle, called at my place of business one day, his ostensible purpose being to bring me some of his literary productions for perusal; but I had been warned that he meant to attack me on the subject of temperance, and his boast had been that he would 'annihilate me;' so, after fortifying himself with his usual stimulant he had come to carry out his purpose. His condition of intoxication was such when he arrived, that I only admitted him inside the door, and with a look and voice as frigid as the north pole, asked him to state his business. He strove in vain to articulate, as in a state of complete collapse he extended his trembling hand with a roll of paper, and finally stammered:

"'R-r-read them and r-re-ciprocate,' backing eagerly out of the door, glad to escape the look of cool scorn with which I had not ceased to regard him since his entrance.

"This man was as fine looking a man as Col. Strong, with fine colloquial and oratorical powers, had occupied high positions politically and religiously, had been prosperous in

business, and had every incentive to a strong and noble manhood, but drink had been his ruin.

"I shall never forget that little episode, for it showed so plainly the moral cowardice of a man who was conscious of his lost rectitude."

"I do not believe that you could treat a woman with such coolness, you, who have spent your life in the championship of the weak and erring," said Elie earnestly.

"Perhaps not," answered Margaret thoughtfully, still leaning against the window casing, and moving her white hand restlessly along the sash, "but it is time that some one entered a remonstrance against unprincipled women, who by their wicked acts inveigle good men into sin, and then blackmail them into forced marriages, when there are true women who love them, and would lift them to the heights, instead of dragging them down to ruin. You yourself know of two such instances of recent occurrence; and yet another in which the man never lived with the woman; but his *fiancee* would not marry him after he was legally free, because man-like he did not trust her at first.

"No one has ever entered a protest against this thing of every-day occurrence, do you not think it is time to adopt the true woman side of the question as a warning to the other class of women?"

"I think it would do no harm to give the men a little warning, that if they are so easily led to perdition, no true woman will have anything to do with them. They are not innocent angels by any means, though you seem to think Col. Winston is."

"Well, I have my reasons for thinking him more sinned against than sinning, the strongest of which is, love; but you and I can only advance the claims of true womanhood by earnestly upholding them.

"By the way did I tell you that my favorite cousin, Luther Wayland, of Wayland, Smith & Co., of Wayland, Ohio, paid me a flying visit while you were away ?

"They are extensive manufacturers and have business interests at Marianna. My cousin knows Col. Winston well. He was astonished beyond expression that Col. Winston could cause me pain, and said :

" 'Cousin, if ever you know the facts, you will find that it is in trying to be honorable that he has involuntarily hurt you, for he would not knowingly wrong any woman.' "

"Can you rely on him," said Elie.

"Yes, he is candid and honest, and bases his convictions on his own observations, without measuring them by the standard of public opinion."

"Well," said Elie with a long drawn sigh, "I hope Col. Winston is worthy of all your devotion, but I have no such faith in men as you have."

"The difference of opinion may be accounted for," said Margaret, "you were raised in a large family of sisters, I never had a sister, but possessed three noble brothers, who have very little patience with their sister's sympathy for human frailty."

CHAPTER XV.

THE UNANSWERED LETTER.

"Do you know anything of the circumstances of Col. Winston's marriage?" said Elie Tripp to a Western gentleman who was calling upon her.

She knew him to be an intimate friend of the brother of Col. Winston, and thinking of her friend Margaret, thought she might gather some information about the wedding, which would convince her of his complete unworthiness.

"I was told by his brother," said the caller, "that it was a very unhappy affair, and that the Colonel probably had no thought of living with the woman;" he added also that it was especially embarrassing because of his official position, however, they had to make the best of it.

Elie immediately communicated this information to Margaret, and she seized upon it as the first tangible fact she had been able to secure in regard to the Colonel's intentions.

For the first time she realized fully the three months torture she had undergone; as with nerves relaxed and sleepless eyes, she thought of all the possibilities of the future if he did refuse to live with the woman he had married; and eventually freed himself from her claims.

At the lunch hour next day, Elie said: "The gentleman, or whom I spoke yesterday, was quite certain that Col. Winston would visit Washington in December. I want you to look more like yourself when he returns; do not allow him to think that he can make such havoc with your health and good looks by his unfaithfulness."

Margaret smiled her answer, and thought, "I ought to look better this morning, for my heart is bounding with a new hope."

Strive as she might, she could not cease to love this man; his strong magnetic presence had impressed her with a force that she had never realized when he was with her, as she did now that he seemed separated from her by a destiny as hard as it was inexplicable.

After awhile she said inquiringly: "Do I not look better this morning?"

"No, you do not."

"I feel as though I had a new lease of life."

"Margaret," said Elie, earnestly, "are you building a new hope on that man's truth?"

Margaret raised her dark eyes, beautiful still, for all the untold sorrow in their depths, and said:

"I love him. I believe at heart he is true to me, and if this is true which your friend tells me of him, I hope to be happy yet."

"Could you forgive him?"

"Yes, and forget the sorrow he has caused me, or only remember it as a proof of my great love."

"Well, in any case, get back your roses; don't let him see that you have deteriorated."

Margaret laughed as she promised her friend to grow beautiful as fast as possible.

"You will have to do less work, then; such indefatigable attention to work as you give would tell in wasted cheeks and haggard looks on any woman," said Elie.

"My dear friend, you are mistaken, one night's heart-ache will age a woman more than five years of hard work."

Not many days after this Margaret came into the office with a radiant light on her face, and said in a low voice to Elie:

"I received a familiar autograph from Bezoor this morning."

"Did you get a letter?" asked Elie, in the same tone.

"No, that would not come as quickly as registered matter."

"Why, I think you are mistaken."

"Well," said Margaret, "I will inquire at the post office."

On her way home that evening Margaret made the inquiry, to which the postmaster replied :

"The letter would come first, because the registered matter would have to be re-registered at every distributing office."

This left it again a matter of conjecture. The effect of this constant looking for something which never came was so evidently depressing to Margaret's spirits that Elie became extremely anxious for her, and watched the mails with no less eagerness than Margaret herself.

She said one morning :

"I am convinced that Col. Winston has never answered your letter ; and I believe he has played a traitor's part with you to secure your influence. I have thought so for some time, and have good reasons for it, but am not at liberty to give them."

"If you were, do you think you could shake my faith ?" said Margaret, raising her clear eyes from her paper, and looking her friend steadily in the face.

"Yes, I do," said Elie ; "at least they ought to, if you are like any other woman on earth."

Roused by resistance, the unhappy girl came to the defence of the man she loved, and with rising color replied :

"It is well then that I cannot know, for it would crush me. As to his double dealing to secure my influence, he is just as much above such a thing as could be conceived.

"While he is a Western man, he is as conservative as a

Southerner in regard to a woman's sphere, at least where I am involved. He was not willing that I should work for him at all. He wanted it done, of course, but preferred to reach the desired result in some other way. He came here representing interests that were of great importance to him and his constituents, but nothing to national legislature; and he realized as well as I that it was only through personal influence that anything could be accomplished; so, by dint of persuasion on my part, he permitted me to work among my friends in his interest."

"Yes, I see that," said Elie, "and it is evident that he, too, saw the value of your intercession, and his feigned reluctance was but another blind to lead you on in his behalf. I have no patience with his treatment of you. As a gentleman, he should at least answer your letter."

Margaret smiled deprecatingly as she replied to Elie's indignant protest.

"Yes, I might make myself wretched over an unanswered letter; but it would be much more sensible to wait patiently the tide of events. He understands my sensitiveness to blame, or unkindness; and would not write in anger. He once wrote me an unkind note, and my sorrow grieved him so deeply that I do not believe he would try it again."

Elie looked upon her friend with a strange mixture of indignation and pity, as she thought: "How she trusts him still, although he has proved himself so unmindful of her feelings. She has not yet merged her ideal into the real man; and I tremble to think what the result of the wakening will be."

Margaret continued: "If our information is correct, he would not answer that letter in detail until after election, and risk sending through the mails."

"But he might have acknowledged its receipt, and explained at length later."

"Of course he might; but we cannot tell how the letter may have impressed him, and as he has only twenty-four hours to answer his month's mail, it may have required more consideration than he had time to give it. In that case it would have been delayed until the next mail; besides, letters are sometimes lost."

"Margaret, it is altogether incomprehensible to me how you can defend that man as you do, and excuse his ill-treatment every time we speak of him."

"'Charity suffereth long and is kind'," quoted Margaret, with a sad smile.

"Charity; I wish it was that sentiment which actuated you; then I might hope to see you yourself again, but this unhappy love is making a wreck of you, and my sympathy with your suffering wholly unfits me for my work."

"My dear Elie," said Margaret, seeming to see for the first time her friend's pale face and quivering lips, "it absolutely distresses me to know that you are bearing my burdens in this manner. I love your sweet sympathy, but I cannot allow you to actually suffer on my account. Believe me, I appreciate the depths of a friendship so strong and true; but you must take it more lightly, for all will be right in time."

"It is of no use to struggle, and try to wrest happiness from the hands of fate;—if it is God's purpose to grant me the bliss I crave it will come; if not,—not;—and that is the sum total of the whole matter."

"I do not believe that God has anything to do with it," said Elie, dropping her hands despairingly at her side.

Margaret looked up with an amused smile as she noticed her friend's attitude, and replied:

"If I thought that God had forgotten this world, or me, as one of the smallest factors, I would get out of it as soon as possible."

"Margaret, can you honestly say that all you have suffered does not shake your faith in the goodness of God? Do you not ask why He denies you the happiness which He grants to others far less worthy?"

"'Whom He loveth He chasteneth,' Elie; but truly, I thoroughly believe in God's goodness, and that when He permits us to suffer, it is for our greatest good eventually; not only fitting us to enjoy whatever of happiness comes to us here, but for our eternal good. I should be inconsolably wretched if I lost that faith for a moment.

"I once came very near it, almost losing my hold of the Infinite Hand; but terror stricken at the condition in which I found myself, I took a firmer hold than ever before, of the blessed promises of God. I shall never permit that experience to repeat itself."

"But why does God permit the good to suffer while the wicked go unpunished?"

"We don't know that; 'God's ways are not our ways,' and I have long since come to the conclusion that a God whom I could comprehend would be no longer a God to me."

Elie looked at her friend doubtfully, and thought:

"How calmly she takes it all, and yet it is killing her."
She said:

"It would actually be a pleasure to see you show a little indignation. Were you ever angry?"

"A few times. I have no doubt it would be a great benefit to me physically and mentally if I could indulge in anger, but it would be impossible toward one I loved. I have seen people who seemed better for a storm of that kind.

But the fact of having so far forgotten my self-respect would make me unendurable to myself and leave me nothing. I have a feeling allied to contempt for a person so destitute of courage as to condemn the world in which they must continue to live; or mankind because one, two, or a dozen have proved themselves unworthy.

"People do not die when they wish to, and life is a thing to be lived out, not endured merely. I am trying to battle bravely with the conditions which surround me, and it is absolutely maddening to a strong woman like me that I cannot rise above them, until the great Healer, Time, affects a change."

Margaret looked appealingly in her friend's face and added: "Elie, dear friend, will you not help me to 'suffer and be strong?'"

Elie's eyes brimmed over with sympathetic tears as she clasped the hand of her friend and promised to emulate her courage; while she hoped for the best.

Among Margaret's most intimate friends in high official circles was a Mrs. Le Baron, a lovely, sincere, spirituelle woman, whose married life was one unending honeymoon. She had been much interested in Margaret's account of Col. Winston, and rejoiced in her friend's happiness; and when Margaret informed her of the sudden marriage she expressed great surprise, but after a moment's thought, said:

"It is strange, but if he is the honorable man you have supposed him to be, you will find that circumstances beyond his control have compelled this action. I would try and think it would all be explained in time, and that in some way it would come out right at last."

Mrs. Le Baron's interest in the progress of events was second only to that of Elie Tripp. She always maintained that whatever rough weather might be encountered. she was

impressed that Margaret's life-boat would drift into a peaceful haven, with lading uninjured and pennon flying. When Margaret told her of the registered letter receipt, she said :

"If that is all, I have later and more direct news than you. My husband's friend, Wm. H. Conley, has just been to visit us, and is full of enthusiasm over his trip to Bezoer. He says Col. Winston is making a wonderful record as an official, and that he seems to have a special gift for the position."

Margaret was glad to hear of the prosperity of the man she loved ; but with all her strength of mind, she still felt the unanswered letter to be the severest trial she had yet endured, and the suspense reduced her, by degrees, to a worse nervous condition than she had ever before experienced, alternating between nervous excitement and prostration. In spite of herself she began to feel alarmed, and one afternoon before leaving the department she sought her friend Elie, and said :

"If anything happens to me, I want you to send word to Col. Winston, Col. Strong, and my brother."

"Margaret! you startle me ; you surely would not do any rash thing?" said Elie, earnestly.

"Bless your heart, no, but my head is at times in such a condition that I fear it will give way in spite of me, and should a severe illness like brain fever ensue, I cannot act for myself. Remember, I want them notified. There is my brother's address," laying a card on the desk, and leaving the room with a rapid step.

CHAPTER XVI

THE LETTERS.

Nearly four weeks after the arrival of the registered letter receipt Margaret found upon her desk a voluminous letter, addressed in the familiar hand-writing of Col. Winston.

With a calm demeanor, but a wildly throbbing heart, she opened the envelope and read the contents, consisting of many closely written pages. If its length astonished her, its character well nigh took her breath away. Finding herself too unnerved to remain at her desk, she asked for leave for the first time in all these weeks of trial; and going directly to her friend, Mrs. Le Baron, she read the letter in her hearing; Mrs. Le Baron frequently interrupting her with:

"Miss Wayland, there is none of Col. Winston's usual sincerity in that letter."—"That was never written for your eyes, but for his wife's."—"It is wholly inferior to him in literary style."

In Margaret's first reading of the letter she was struck by the insincerity of its tone, and almost began to believe what her friends had so often said to her, that Col. Winston had deceived her with his specious flatteries, solely to secure her influence, and that of her friends, for his own purposes.

As she read it again, and heard her friend's comments, she was satisfied that the letter had been written for some other eye than her own; and after reaching her room, though suffering from a nervous chill she carefully, and

with lawyer-like exactness, studied each point by itself, and made out the case against him. With a pencil, as each point presented itself, she noted in the margin her impressions.

It was a tissue of false statements, misinterpretation, injustice, and direct falsehood. He expressed great indignation that she should have betrayed him to the Chief Magistrate and her personal friends, and also instigated a private investigation of his personal affairs. He then threatened a denial of all her statements, and a defense of his honor before the President by an exposure of their private correspondence.

Changing his threatening tone with manifest inconsistency, he plead earnestly for her continued friendship, and admitted that it would be his loss if, unconsciously and unintentionally, he had inspired in her a tender passion which he could not reciprocate. He was not a ladies' man in any sense, and made no pretense of a love more than Platonic for any woman other than the "domestic, home-loving little lady who was his dearly loved wife." He expressed unbounded astonishment as to what she could have learned, by private inquiry, to elicit from her the expressions of sympathy contained in her letter, and pledged his word, as an honest man, that his wife was the woman of his free choice above all others; and that he married her because he loved her purely, fondly, and devotedly,—and all the more that she was not a society woman; defending his wife's reputation against all aspersions, and declaring that he had told her the whole truth. He hinted at the possibility that he might visit the Capital during the winter, and that he would be pleased to call upon her, but questioned the wisdom of such a step, as he was no longer an unmarried man. He did not fear to meet her, but his wife, knowing all that had transpired, might not approve of

his calling, and he would not willingly do anything to impair her confidence in him. He finally closed by wishing to remain her friend, if she would permit, although he declined any correspondence that breathed a sentiment which might not properly exist between them under present conditions; and warned her that it would be at her peril if she insinuated anything "against the good, lovable, and loving little woman, who had the sanction of both Church and State for writing the prefix Mrs. before the name of her would-be friend," Ralph Winston.

Margaret sat in deep thought for many minutes after this critical reading of the letter before her; then, after summing up her conclusions, said to herself:

"This is certainly a very cunningly devised fable. Was I dreaming then, when I thought he said he loved me? Was it a myth that he marked out my duties as his wife, and showed me by every means in his power that he considered my future as belonging to him?—No; I will not concede that I have been so deceived. It is clear that the man is appalled at the position in which he finds himself; and resorts to this base subterfuge to exonerate himself in the eyes of those under whose observation this letter may come. He assumes a candid manliness, as he disclaims all thought of having won my love, to deceive the eye of the President, if it should be submitted to him, and perhaps his wife, in case the time should come when it is called in question."

Margaret's grieved and troubled spirit could not rest until she had confided her sense of the indignity she had received in this speciously worded letter, to her friend Gen. Jones, and Mrs. Morgan, the friend of her girlhood.

Her love for Mrs. Morgan had never abated in all the years that had gone by, and during Ralph Winston's presence in Washington, Mrs. Morgan had also been a resident of that city, and had seen much of Margaret; had watched

the new tender light that was growing in her eyes, and the youthful radiance of her cheek, until she became convinced that a new, sweet hope was springing up in the heart of her friend.

A few quiet questions on Mrs. Morgan's part, a laughing rejoinder on Margaret's, elicited the whole story of her happiness and hopes; she said:

"I have been often called an old maid, shrinking somewhat from the epithet, but I am heartily glad now that it is so; for if God permits me to marry the man of my choice, I can give him my undivided affection."

Mrs. Morgan had returned to her home, and upon reading the newspaper announcement of the marriage had sent a postal to Margaret, hoping she was well and happy. Not yet could she open her heart even to dear Mrs. Morgan, and sending a card of thanks in reply, she still withheld her sorrow from this true friend. Time passed on until this new blow had fallen, and then she wrote all the particulars.

The day following the receipt of the letter, Margaret was at her post as usual, hoping to continue her duties without interruption or observation, but found herself compelled to yield at last, and return to the quiet of her room. Her overwrought physical nature gave way for a time, but reasoning herself into calmness and quiet, she found that her almost unbounded faith in Ralph Winston's integrity was rapidly weakening.

She had in a few days reached the conclusion, that no man of ordinary manliness, honor and honesty, would presume to write such a dastardly letter, in return for the unlimited kindness which he had received at her hands, in face of the facts which he utterly ignored. It was but a step from this kind of reasoning to the thought that the Ralph Winston of her imagination had no real existence in

the man who had deceived and deserted her, and then repudiated all her claims on his regard.

With a rush of indignant feeling, she gathered up her torn heart-strings, and said :

"The struggle is over, Margaret Wayland is herself again; and life can be made worth living without Ralph Winston."

With the old-time energy and courage, she soon regained her physical health, as well as mental equilibrium and went about her duties as usual, almost regretting that she had so hastily confided in her friends, by exposing the contents of that cowardly letter. She received one morning a letter from Gen. Jones, in which he said :

"Your letter causes me great uneasiness; your account of his communication is no revelation to me of the man's character. He will, doubtless, deny all your claims because to do otherwise would be a confession. I think he will try to frighten you; and I fear that your spirit will prompt such resistance as will make trouble.

"I judge from your closing remark that you intend to refuse him an interview, should he be so injudicious as to request one. In that I think you are wise. No good could come of it. To repudiate his wife would be a confession more humiliating than he is capable of making, and he will not do it. I sincerely hope you will act with prudence. You know my opinion of the man. He is entirely capable of refusing his wife her rights; but his interests will hold him to the legal relation he has assumed. Again, I must repeat, be very careful what you do."

Margaret pondered over this advice, and smiled when she read the letter from Mrs. Morgan, which followed quickly, to see how nearly her two friends agreed upon the proper course of action for her to pursue. Mrs. Morgan wrote :

"I hasten to answer your letter. I am troubled about you—you are not yourself. Shake yourself free and regain your mental equilibrium.

"My dear, I am your senior, and I know the world, I surely have proved myself your friend, and you will concede that I am well balanced. Trust me, then, while I presume to advise you. Treat the man with the scorn he deserves, but do not give him the triumph of seeing how badly he has hurt you.

"You think that I am not as strong as you, but I tell you I would break my heart in silence before I would let any one know that I had been so trifled with.

"My poor girl, I am sorry for you, but do try to steady yourself, remembering that the highest test of heroism is to be able to hold still. I have your interest at heart, and my earnest prayer shall be that peace may come to your troubled spirit."

Margaret immediately mailed to Gen. Jones a copy of Col. Winston's letter, with a request that he remail it to Mrs. Morgan, after having read it himself. She wished these kind friends, who did not fear to speak their minds to her, to know the whole truth, that they might speak understandingly. To Gen. Jones, she said:

"I shall be grateful for any advice you have to proffer after a careful reading of this copy."

To Mrs. Morgan's kind letter, she replied:

"I am glad to assure you that Col. Winston's power to hurt me is a thing of the past. He has at last by his own act awakened me to a sense of his utter unworthiness. I have believed in him against all the world, but he has dethroned himself, and I am free."

Margaret quietly pursued her usual avocations, and seemed once more quite like herself; yet one cannot pass

through such extremes of feeling without its leaving pitiful scars on heart and brain.

In the course of a few days a response came from Gen. Jones, in which he analyzed the letter submitted to his inspection, and expressed his opinion of the situation in unmistakable terms.

He said: "I am satisfied that if you do not drop him and the controversy about where it is, you will regret it, for he is a reckless and desperate man.

"The question for you to settle just now is this, 'What will I gain if I win? What will I lose, or stand a chance of losing?'

"In my judgment you have nothing whatever to gain in any possible event, and you certainly have something to lose. He is so far beneath you that your only proper attitude now is one of scornful indifference. You were attracted by an ideal hero, and now that you find him made of the basest clay, it is both undignified and unwomanly to waste feeling of any sort upon him. My earnest advice is to ignore him completely, and at once.

"I would not see him voluntarily; if compelled to do so, say nothing; commit yourself in no way—maintain a positive silence as to your thoughts, and furnish him with no ammunition to use against you."

Margaret read, and pondered over this letter acknowledging its sterling good sense, but feeling that Gen. Jones misunderstood her position. She had not thought of entering into a controversy with Col. Winston, or of taking retribution into her own hands.

She replied: "He is in the hands of a just God, who will doubtless mete out to him more retributive justice than I (for pity) shall care to see. I had no thought of self, or of anything it involved to me, when I wrote that letter to the President. It was done to protect the President in the mat-

ter of an appointment for Col. Winston, in which I had been interested enough to visit the President in his behalf. I regretted having written the letter almost as soon as I had done so, although I obeyed an almost uncontrollable impulse in writing it. It was then, however, too late to recall it, and was the fault of no one but Col. Winston himself. Had he written me an honorable letter, with honorable promptness, the trouble would all have been avoided; but when his tardy letter arrived the mischief was done. I did all I could to undo it, but without avail.

"I understand that Col. Winston has already engaged apartments at the Arlington for himself and wife through the month of December. It will be the short session, and little will probably be done except the passing of appropriation bills; nothing, except by superhuman personal effort.

"The attorney of Bezoor rings captured most of the leaders last year, except my friends, who by energetic, persevering work succeeded in getting one important measure through for me. Two others were done in committee, and one is still in abeyance. The particulars of the marriage are known here, and will undoubtedly be used secretly against him everywhere. He will find, I fear, that the 'way of the transgressor is hard,' not that I shall work against him, or appear in the matter at all; but outraged public opinion will express itself."

Before many days had elapsed Mrs. Morgan returned Col. Winston's letter, which had been forwarded to her by Gen. Jones, with the following comments:

"If sincere, it is a very straightforward, manly letter—if not, it is certainly a model of duplicity.

"You have done much for this man, but men do not often love well the women who *serve* them."

At this time a reaction seemed to take place in Margaret's manner. She had determined to banish Ralph Winston

from her mind and heart, and in her inmost thought was glad to have escaped a union with one so devoid of principle as she now believed him to be.

She went about her duties with a returning light in her eyes, and color in her cheeks, to which they had long been strangers. She even found herself the center of a merry bevy of young ladies in one of the rooms of the Department one morning, and had just indulged in a ripple of genuine laughter, when to her chagrin the door was opened by a Bureau official, who said:

"The strict attention to business required in this Department, can scarcely be given in the midst of such laughter."

The young ladies exchanged a glance of amusement as one replied:

"But these are holidays."

"We are here for work, just the same," he answered with a smile as dignified and condescending as possible.

Miss Wayland, with the laughter still trembling on her lips said:

"The quarter's work is done, and we have nothing whatever to do."

"Boisterous laughter is a violation of the Department rules," replied the chief with a slight frown.

"I beg your pardon," said Miss Wayland quietly, "the rebuke belongs justly to me, it is a thoughtless habit, and shall not be repeated here."

Her frankness and humility were so sincere, as to disarm all prejudice on the part of the reprover; and he retired wishing that he had not interfered with their innocent merriment.

The episode was a revelation to Margaret, that her late depression of spirits was a thing of the past, and that she was indubitably returning to her former healthy condition of mind and body. She began to take an interest in her

surroundings as before, and felt as though she had awakened from an uncanny dream.

Two weeks later Mrs. Elie Tripp had returned to her home, and the night being dark and stormy, had said to herself:

"No one will come in to-night, I will slip into this tea-gown, and make myself happy for an evening with my lovely new book, 'Geraldine.'"

She had just comfortably seated herself in an arm chair, with book in hand, thinking, "The cover even looks inviting, with its active diaphanous cupid in the corner, and bunch of peacock feathers tied with a love knot; there is really a great deal of character in a title page," when she was aroused from her reverie by the announcement of "a lady to see Mrs. Tripp."

"Did she give her name?" she asked of the servant.

"No, ma'am; she had a veil over her face, and a long seal skin wrap on."

Elie laid aside her book with a sigh, and advanced to meet her visitor, a tall, well-dressed, mysterious looking woman, who immediately said:

"I would like to see you alone," and glanced inquiringly around the room.

"We are alone," replied Elie with dignity; "permit me to ask the name of my caller."

With a hesitating, and evidently feigned voice the woman answered:

"Samantha Crosscard."

"Well," said Elie briefly, "what can I do for you?"

"I understand that you are a friend of a Miss Wayland here," said the lady.

"Yes, I am," answered Elie decidedly.

"Well, she is engaged in a black-mailing scheme, and

you are believed to be in collusion with her," said the woman in a trembling voice.

"This is the first time I have heard anything of the kind," Elie replied with a curling lip.

The woman in an insinuating voice continued:

"A man in Illinois said to me that you had always been a woman of highest character and standing, and asked me to warn you against Miss Wayland, as she was a dangerous woman."

Elie determined not to discuss her friend with this stranger, and simply said:

"I do not think so;" then indignantly added, "I do not permit any person to dictate to me whom I shall select for friends. I am capable of deciding those things for myself."

Seeing that nothing was to be gained by this interview, and that Mrs. Tripp was above intimidation, the veiled stranger departed as unceremoniously as she had come.

CHAPTER XVII

COL. WINSTON'S ARRIVAL.

Elie, who had been absent from Washington for some time, suddenly made her appearance one morning in room 58, and after a warm greeting from Margaret, exclaimed:

"What do you think? I have seen Congressman Jennings this morning, and when I asked him about the arrival of his family he said, with a look and tone of annoyance:

"'I don't know, I have just been looking for our old apartments at the Arlington, and find that Col. Winston, of Bezoer, is negotiating for them for December; I thought I was quite early enough to get them, but he has got the start of me.'

"'But, Mr. Jennings,' said I, 'I should think he could take smaller rooms for only one?'

"'He brings his bride with him—he is married, you know,' was the answer. Is it not strange that, without knowing that I had any earthly interest in the man, this news should come to me? I have also heard from another source that the Colonel has written to some friend that he will be here in December."

Margaret had resumed her work, and without raising her eyes, said:

"It does not matter, let them come."

Elie gave her a quick glance, and thought:

"I wonder if she really does not care. She takes it very coolly, at any rate."

From this date Margaret watched the weekly Marianna paper with some interest until this announcement met her eye—

"A private letter from Col. Winston states that he will leave Bezoor by the December steamer and reach Marianna this week."

After this she was daily expecting to hear that he had arrived in the city, but day after day elapsed, still he did not come; and the inference was that he had given up coming, at least by way of Marianna, as the papers of that place preserved the strictest silence on the subject.

On the evening of January 13th, occurred the President's reception to the Diplomatic Corps.

As Margaret returned from the office, she found upon her table a letter in the familiar handwriting of Ralph Winston. After tearing it open and possessing herself of its contents, she was almost incapable of dressing for the evening.

When she had relinquished all hope of receiving any reply to her second letter to Bezoor, she carefully analyzed the copy which she had kept, to see if she could have written anything to offend him. Not finding anything but the kindest expression of feeling, she sent a hastily written note, saying:

"I am heartily sorry if you have misunderstood the true sympathy which prompted my letter to you, and I hope you are not too offended to acknowledge its receipt. It is pitiful, indeed, if true friends must hurt each other when they seek only to be kind."

This note and the cruel letter of October 23d had passed each other on their long journey, and now, when she had fancied that this dream of life was over, came the long-delayed reply. He did not think that he had misunderstood her, but she had doubtless written him on the strength of very erroneous information; if he was hurt it was because her letter conveyed a knowledge that she had been inquiring into his personal affairs, and was too hasty in extending

sympathy when there was no occasion for it. He was more grieved than he could express that she should have so misinterpreted his feelings toward her, which were just the same that he still entertained,—a warm personal regard and admiration for her good qualities of mind and heart; but he had already written her freely in regard to the letter referred to. He only addressed her again to crave pardon if in writing on so delicate a subject he had unwittingly said anything unkind. He certainly did not wish to be rude to one he esteemed so highly, and if they ceased to be friends it would be no fault of his.

He then repeated the false statements of the former letter with so much apparent sincerity and real feeling, that Margaret began to think that he must be laboring under a sort of self-deception, having told the story so often that it had assumed the guise of truth. At all events he seemed to hold his reputation for veracity as so unimpeachable, that he could afford to falsify with impunity.

Margaret had no time to look at the papers next morning, and was surprised when Elie sought her in Room 58, to show her a newspaper telegram from Col. Winston in the States, en route for Washington. She had hardly looked for his arrival so soon.

Elie said: "I could not sleep last night for thinking of you; my eyes would persistently fly open in spite of all I could do, while my mind was busied with your past, present and future. How changed are all your prospects. When Col. Winston left you, your life's happiness seemed assured; now,—O, Margaret, how will you bear it?"

Margaret's soft eyes filled with tears as she met her friend's questioning look, and steadying her voice, she said reprovingly:

"Elie, why will you persist in making yourself unhappy over my sorrows? I am strong enough to bear whatever is

to come; do not fear for me, and do not make yourself ill through sympathy for me.

"Nobody ever had such friends as I have, I am sure."

"Margaret, dear," said Elie, "I cannot help feeling for you if I would, and I would not if I could; for I should consider myself unworthy the name of friend if my sympathies did not respond to my friend's needs; and loving you as I do, I cannot forbear asking you what effect Col. Winston's presence in Washington will have on you?"

"I do not know, Elie; I confess to a sleepless night, and a certain degree of nervousness to-day; but you may rest assured of this, my equilibrium is fully restored, and Ralph Winston's power to disturb my peace of mind is a thing of the past."

Margaret pondered over the contents of Col. Winston's last letter, and in view of his near presence in the city, wrote a final letter to dispose of all questions at issue between them. She wrote:

Yours of recent date is just at hand, having come, I infer, on the same steamer with yourself. I acknowledge its receipt in a spirit of kindness, and trust that I shall not be misunderstood. I appreciate the expression of feeling and accept your apology. We can hereafter hold no communication except on business, and, you will please understand, that must be done by mail. It will be impossible for me to receive you on terms of friendship under existing conditions, which I regret more than I can ever tell you.

I did believe in you against your friends and mine, till your letter of October 23d. Nothing could move me to doubt your sterling worth, until by many pages of falsehood you dethroned yourself. A man whom I know to possess qualities of head and heart, which if combined with stability and integrity might move a nation, can never get beyond my sympathy and charity; and if the time should ever come, that I can assist you in any laudable ambition, I will be ready to do so.

My hope and prayer is that in God's own time and way, He will make of you as true a man as I once believed you to be.

Your friend always,

MARGARET WAYLAND.

The morning paper of January 20th announced "Col. Winston and wife, of Bezoor, at the Arlington."

The days which followed were busy ones with Margaret; she allowed herself no time to think whether their presence in the city could affect her peace of mind or not. Her physician had ordered her to seek recreation, and the invitations she had accepted, with her daily duties, completely occupied her waking hours.

Having always been a business woman, though giving to society its due as far as circumstances would permit, it was a marked change for her, from her work of the previous winter, when everything was made to conform to securing influence for Col. Winston's plans.

She now gave her spare time to attending receptions, and making the various rounds of calls; so different in Washington from that of any city under the sun. Elie watched her friend intently, and could not discover a sign of the nervousness, which she felt sure that she must feel.

"Proud, proud girl," she thought, as she observed Margaret's easy gaiety, "she would not be a woman if she did not suffer from the presence of the man she loved so well; but her studied indifference is the most like reality of anything I ever saw."

Elie one day invited Margaret to go with her on a round of calls, adding:

"I will have to call on Mrs. Winston out of respect to the Col.'s brother, and then I will come for you."

"Very well," said Margaret, in a matter-of-fact tone, "I will be ready."

"Well," she remarked, as she adjusted her drapery, and settled back in the carriage seat, "I know you are dying to tell, what is your verdict?"

Elie pursed her pretty lips, and answered: "To tell the truth, I am disappointed, or rather surprised, at her youth-

ful appearance; she looks like a girl, just what a bachelor might fancy, but quite unlike the chosen wife of a mature, dignified man of the world."

"The pretty doll style, I suppose."

"No, she's not even pretty; she is small and slight, with brown hair and eyes, pleasant and cordial in her manners, and evidently quite unaccustomed to society. She seemed sensible, but not at all stylish."

"How was she dressed?"

"In a handsome black silk, trimmed with jet."

Their first call was upon a Mrs. Gratia. Her home was in the fourth flat of a business block. One could not help thinking when approaching the elevator entrance:

"O dear, I would not like to live in a business place like this," but after a four-story ascent in a dimly lighted elevator, and a few steps along the hall, the home-like apartments and the atmosphere of content and happiness which pervade them, change the impression to one of admiration.

After a pleasant greeting from the lady, and a few minutes exchange of trifling topics, Margaret exclaimed, as her eyes took in the pleasant rooms, "This is just my idea of true living," to which Mrs. Gratia replied:

"I was determined, when I married, to keep house if I had to do so in two rooms of an attic. I can see almost nothing of my husband except by living in this way. The main office is a few blocks away from here, but my husband's working office is here adjoining my parlor; would you like to see it?"

The ladies gave a ready assent and she ushered them into his "den," as she called it, which was separated from the parlor only by elegant portieres. Large cases of books adorned the walls, and the other appointments of the room were in every respect adapted to a literary gentleman's

work. All indicated order, practicability, good taste, comfort and even luxury, but above all, happiness.

Everything seemed to say: "We live for each other."

Mrs. Gratia smiled brightly as she said: "My apartments have never seemed small but once. I had been making the Cabinet calls, which of course included the wife of the Secretary of the Navy. She received that day in her spacious and elegant ball room, and as I looked from the parlor down the long vista of that room, my own little parlors seemed so small in comparison that the contrast left its impression for a few days."

"I have never envied ladies who live in large houses," said Margaret; "I can only associate so many rooms with the one idea of slavish work for a woman, in the care and direction of a large retinue of servants."

"They are only desirable," remarked Mr. Gratia, who had entered, "as a means by which one can exercise the privilege of hospitality, which is certainly a great pleasure."

"True," said Miss Wayland, "but I have seen truer hospitality in the far west in two or three small rooms, than I ever have in the most costly mansion."

This led to a conversation on frontier life, and altogether the call was a most enjoyable one. As they once more took their seats in the carriage, Margaret said thoughtfully:

"A true woman, indeed, I was never more charmed with any one. She has enough of the right sort of spirit to demand a home, and adapt herself to her husband's circumstances with all the sweetness, grace, and dignity of a millionaire's wife."

"Margaret, you ought to be a wife, you appreciate so thoroughly a woman's duties."

"I know it," said Margaret, with a half-sad, half-merry smile. "I sometimes feel that I have been quite defrauded

of my just rights, that I am denied the bliss of making for some one just such a home as that we have left."

Next day word came to the office that Inez had been seriously ill for some time. "Another attack from the heart-ache for her lost little ones," thought Margaret; and as soon as she was released from her office work, she went directly to her friend's house. To her great surprise Inez answered the door-bell in person.

"Well!" exclaimed Margaret, "I have just heard of your illness, and came to reproach you for not letting me know of it; you remember that you promised to do so."

"We have been too ill to think of anything—for my husband was also ill,—and the sister of my one servant died in the midst of it all. She has not returned, and I think she must be ill herself."

"How are you now?" asked Margaret, "Are you quite recovered?"

"I am still weak, and one does not recover easily from an attack of the heart. It came near being death this time."

"I am so far from you, that I do not hear except by special messenger, but I beg you, do not fail to send for me if you ever have another such an illness."

The conversation then drifted to other matters and Inez spoke of Col. Winston.

"I see they are here," said she, "and you ought to be thankful that you are not Mrs. Winston; you are better off as you are."

"Perhaps so, but, Inez, it is a lonely life, and only to be borne by constant occupation. Any true woman wishes to be the central figure of a home, and life is not quite complete without such a home."

"You are so mistaken, Margaret, you look only on one side of the problem of life. See how comfortable you are, you have only to earn your salary and enjoy it."

"But life has no compensation for a lonely worker, one becomes a mere machine."

"You are still unconvinced, I see. Think of the mother love defrauded, which you have escaped with all its sorrow and anguish. You talk of the lost lover love, of the sweet home life you have missed, but you do not know what suffering means. I thought I loved my husband well enough to die for him until my first baby lay in my arms; when he seemed insignificant in comparison with the little helpless creature, so truly mine, and when my second baby came, I loved it just as well."

"But, Inez, I do not think maternity eliminates wife love usually,—as you claim it did in your case,—but is instead, a new tie between husband and wife, another well-spring of pleasure for both to enjoy; and I think you are self-deceived when you think it is true of you."

"No, I am not, I have the best husband in the world, but if I was a girl again, knowing what I do now, I would never marry, but would save myself the bitter sorrow which you have escaped."

"Nothing can compensate for the loss of children, the feeling that in two little mounds of earth lie buried your heart, your soul, your hopes, your ambitions,—the best part of you gone out into the vast unknown," and burying her face in her hands the frail form shook with uncontrollable sobs.

For this hurt and bleeding heart there was no balm; but Margaret in her heart of hearts thought:

"'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

CHAPTER XVIII

A SUNDAY OF THE SOCIAL SEASON.

Elie sat by her window one Sunday morning, with a book in her hand, now and then glancing at its pages, then looking thoughtfully out, in a reverie something like this:

"I feel very comfortable, the room is just warm enough, my new book is interesting, and this sense of rest is positively irresistible, after a week in the Department drudgery. If I dress and go to church, it will be just another turn of the crank on tired and overstrained nerves, which I really cannot bear. I wonder after all, whether the work-day Sabbath, which men count off as so much done for the Lord, will be accepted as the fulfilment of the law: 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' Why, I do believe that is Margaret," and dropping her book, she advanced to meet her friend, who came up the steps with a tired, listless swinging of the body quite unusual for her.

"How comfortable you look," said Margaret, as she took in her friend's surroundings; the pleasant room, the easy chair, the soft, delicate tea-gown trimmed with cascades of white lace, the new book, lying face downward on the window sill.

"Well, are you not going to church?"

"No, I think not," said Elie, "I have decided to keep my Sabbath at home. Where are you going?"

"I started for the 'Foundry,'" was the reply.

"Bishop A—— preaches there this morning."

"He does; O, I don't care to hear him, who preaches at your church?"

"I know something better than that," said Elie, "just remove your wraps and entertain me; I am just in the mood for company."

Margaret needed no urging, and they soon fell into their accustomed habit of discussing department news, and personal matters.

"Why is there so much delay in Mr. Pleasanton's confirmation?" inquired Margaret.

"It is being fought," replied Elie, "by the clerks who were not willing to do their duty under him when he was a chief of division. My friends have done all they could to counteract their influence, but clerks do villainous things here sometimes."

"I believe it; by the way, the sections so long vacant in our division are being filled."

"I am glad of that, however," said Elie, "for you will not have to work so unremittingly."

Margaret opened wide her dark eyes and said:

"I am not working hard, at least for me, you know that it is my nature to 'do with my might' whatever my hands find to do."

"Yes, but department life is a hard one for most people, one feels that the department is a great machine, and when the motor starts, all the big and little wheels begin to move, and there is no way out, but to break out."

"Well, why should we want to get out? The very necessity of moving has been my safety this year. Work is a panacea for every ill, and I am sure without it I would have been an inmate of 'St. Elizabeth's.' I never meant to say anything about it, but I tell you truly, that I could not have kept the nervous tears back yesterday, if I had not worked with all my might. Then when the office closed, I went immediately to Mrs. Cleveland's reception. The serene atmosphere of the White House, since she is its lovely mis-

stress, seems to quiet all excitement, restrain all nervousness, and restore the mental equilibrium of all who come within its influence. I think it is universally conceded that no lady of the White House has ever given more pleasure to all she meets, than Mrs. Cleveland."

Elie looked up sympathetically, and said :

"I thought so, I knew that you could not be a woman, and not be more or less affected by Ralph Winston's presence in the city."

"I do not know what it is," answered Margaret, while the tears sprang to her eyes, "I give myself no time to realize that he is here. It does not move me any more to think of him, than of the Washington Monument; but I could not banish a moment yesterday, that feeling that the tears would come if I allowed myself a minute's rest.

It seems incomprehensible to me, that after all my struggles for mastery over myself, and my earnest prayers for strength, that I should still be weak enough to care for his presence;" and with a quick hand she dashed away the falling tear.

"It is always so. I have a friend who passed through nearly the same experience, and I do not believe that even now, after a period of six years, that she could see her former lover without a severe nervous prostration," said Elie musingly.

"Does she live in Washington?" Margaret asked with an appearance of interest.

"No, she lives in a western city, and was engaged to just such a fascinating man as Col. Winston. She had many admirers, and her friends were wholly unreconciled to her engagement to this gentleman, who was a business man of Chicago."

"At last she heard, in an incidental way, that he was also engaged to a banker's daughter in another State. She in-

formed him of the rumor, which had reached her ears, but he indignantly denied its truth, and she, like you, believed him."

"How could she help it? If you love a man well enough to marry him you ought to be able to trust his word. When I jestingly asked Col. Winston to introduce me to Mrs. Carroll, (the lady to whom his friends believed him to be engaged), he was indignant; and spared no pains to convince me that she was absolutely nothing to him but an acquaintance, whom he visited because he was fond of her children; and I believed every word implicitly. I have since been informed that when he was seeking his appointment, he authorized his friends to use the argument that he hoped by absence and distance, to secure his daughter's consent to his marriage with her. On the contrary he told me, that he wanted this official position because he was interested in the prosperity of that country; and it was also good business capital.

"But what became of your friend and her lover?"

"Her brother-in-law decided to take the matter in his own hands, and discovered beyond a doubt that the information they had received was correct; that he was engaged to the lady, and her trousseau purchased.

"He then visited the young man, forbade his entering his house again, or speaking to Edith. Of course, it nearly broke her heart."

"What became of him?"

"O, he married before the time appointed for the wedding, and deserted her at once. She afterward procured a divorce for desertion, and he has gone from bad to worse, until he is a ruined and desperate man."

"As was inevitable," said Margaret, "a man cannot play fast and loose with women's hearts in that way, without retribution overtaking him in time. Ralph Winston is

sure to ruin himself, unless the prayers of his daughter, and the woman who once believed in him, avail at the Throne of Grace."

"Are you still praying for him, Margaret?"

"I never close my eyes at night without asking God to save that life, with its grand possibilities, from the ruinous effects of that hasty marriage."

"Do you think that such prayers will be answered?"

"I do," she said earnestly, "my prayers are always answered—not always in my time, and my way; but in better time and wiser way."

"You certainly waste time on the most unworthy objects of any woman I ever knew, who possessed your sound judgment in other things," said Elie.

"My father taught me that it was better to bestow charity on a dozen unworthy objects, than to withhold it from one who might prove worthy. Ralph Winston certainly has more of those natural gifts which betoken power, when combined with high moral character, than any man I ever knew." Margaret paused and looked thoughtfully out of the window, while Elie said to herself:

"My little story did not fulfill its purpose of diverting her mind after all."

At last Margaret broke the silence, by saying:

"Is it not strange that this experience should destroy all my interest in public work forever? For twenty years I have been interested in all that interests men, in general, as well as being interested for women. My father and brothers have always counseled with me when I was within their reach—as much as though I had been a business man. Now that is all gone out of my life. My whole thought is revolutionized—I have not interest enough in politics to read the papers."

"You will recover from that in '88 if the Presidential nominees are the same as in '84," said Elie laughing.

"It would only be temporary, as a matter of duty, not of taste. I have never had the least inclination to make a public speech since Ralph Winston told me I would not be indulged in doing so as his wife."

Then rising from her chair, she slowly paced the room back and forth; and continuing in a tone and manner no longer dreamy, but clear, concise, forcible:

"Elie, the Democratic nominee for '88 must be the same or they are defeated from the first. If the Democratic party repudiates its own administration, the voters regardless of party, will forsake that power which cannot sustain its own dignity. There is a certain logic in politics, as well as business, which leads to certain results.

"If Abraham Lincoln had not been re-nominated for a second term, the Republican party never would have had a second term; because by this action they would have said that their party was incompetent to administer the affairs of the Nation."

As she warmed up in her subject, her eyes were alight, and her cheeks were all aglow, while Elie surprised, yet amused, said with a light ripple of laughter:

"I thought you took no interest in politics; O, Margaret, you will be as much of a politician as ever when the right time comes. You can never make me believe that you have lost interest in anything that concerns the public good. By the way, what do you think of the New York millionaire's son marrying the actress?"

"I see no reason why she may not prove the most domestic of wives; she has known every side of life, and has found nothing in it to compensate her for the loss of love and home—every true woman feels this, and life is incomplete without family ties."

"Then Margaret, what do you think of the stage-struck society favorite, who is becoming an actress?"

"I think she is fond of admiration, and the devotion of one heart is not sufficient for her. She thirsts for the hearts of millions. She will win them without doubt. Her husband will be proud of her for a time; but by and by, he will grow weary of that adulation in which he has no part, and will want his wife and home;—all men do—and as such things go, separation will follow. A man is safer to marry a woman who knows her own powers; who has tested her ability—than one whose talent or genius is quite undeveloped. Woe then to the man of mediocre ability, when his wife discovers her own capacity for a higher life than he can comprehend."

"You speak like one having experience," said Elie.

"I have observation, which is better and cheaper than experience," answered Margaret; "and besides I know this,—that all men are afraid of women in public life; when really some of them,—most of them, I believe, have become so by force of circumstances, and tired of its whirl and excitement, home-life would seem an earthly paradise.

"In my own case, I have experienced something of this. I remember many years ago, when public life was new to me, I met incidentally a gentleman who was inclined to pay me special attention; and I afterward learned that he made inquiry of my friends, as to the probability of my fitness for domestic life. My friend's reply was this:

"'I think if she was married she would be completely devoted to her home, for whatever Miss Wayland does is done with all her might; and the duty that lies nearest her is the one she loves best to do.'"

"Was the man satisfied with this? And did he offer himself?" laughed Elie.

Margaret evaded a direct reply by saying: "The man's

want of discrimination was offensive to me; but I have since learned that he is a fair type of men in general; they prefer that their wives should be of the clinging sort, and look reverently upward to meet the eyes of their lord and master. They are also somewhat afraid that taste for extravagance in dress will be acquired by a public life.

"It is true that a woman must dress according to her circumstances and station to be respected; and many women like myself,—for various reasons—have more station than means to support it, and have to supply the deficiency by industry and ingenuity."

"You always look well dressed, Margaret, and I often wonder how you compass it."

"Just as I tell you,—by management. You remember that jetted basque that Ralph Winston admired so much? Well, that would have cost fifty dollars if I had bought it outright; but I procured the plain brocade for a trifle, then less than a dollar's worth of beads; and labored steadily about ten days in sewing them on, when I had nothing more important to do. This is only one illustration of many of the fine things I wear; but to the average self-made man such things on their face, without their specific history, signify foolish extravagance, and men seem to be incapable of estimating this talent in women at its full value. It is so much permanently invested capital, and such men as Col. Winston never think that cigars cost them more than dress and society do the average woman."

"What makes you think he thought of it at all?" asked Elie.

"O, he never omitted anything by way of instruction, as to my future position," said Margaret with a little scornful laugh, and curl of the proud lip; "the way he broached this subject was by telling me that he had been invited to make senatorial calls by a lady who was a sister of the

truest friend he ever had among men ; that he never cared much for the girls, as they never seemed to care for anything but dress and style, regardless of the fact that their hard-worked brother was supplying the means to gratify their vanity ; then." she added, "he was always laughing about a woman's spending all the money she could get, on dress."

"But, poor things, what else can they do, if that is all they are permitted to think of?" said Elie.

"True, they must have some compensation, and a great many of them take it in this way, and thus think they are the best of wives and mothers."

"Most men, I suppose, think that a woman becomes unwomanly in public work."

"Undoubtedly," Margaret replied, "some do at any rate. The president of one of our wealthy land syndicates on the frontier, came in my office over at Deguerre, and found me making a dress. He looked surprised, and said :

"You have not then abandoned womanly pursuits altogether for the practice of the law?"

"No, said I, I have to dress still, and if I have more time to make one, than I have cash on hand to hire it done, I have to do it myself. By the way, that dress had a history. Our temperance work was, by some means, not popular in the prettiest town on all the frontier, but white dresses were as stylish as they are in Washington, and I conceived the idea of trying the eloquence of a handsome white dress in that town. The annual meeting of our Woman's Christian Temperance Union was to be held there, just before a political convention, which we wished to have endorse a temperance measure. I sent to an acquaintance in Chicago, asking her to select the finest material possible for my dress. I wore it first to the convention of ladies, and then to the reception given by our temperance ladies to the political convention. The reception was held at the first hotel in the

city, and was quite a stylish affair. The dress accomplished its mission beautifully. I did not think myself capable of enjoying, even for a good cause, as I did the pleasure of being the best dressed lady in the room."

"It must have been a novel kind of enjoyment for you."

"Yes, and consequently more appreciated. Our ladies had induced the social leaders of the city, to act on the reception committee that evening; ladies who had never thought that a reception could be given to men without wine; and the parlors which were open to us, were in a liquor hotel.

"There never was a more perfect success than our temperance reception. Among those present was the wife of one of the most prominent men—a magnificent woman, but prejudiced against me on account of my temperance work; just as I used to be against the regular army, as a useless ornamental appendage to the government, before I had ever visited a military post,—in short, one is apt to be most prejudiced in regard to that of which they know least. This lady would not enter the room of her most intimate friend, when I was this friend's guest, because she 'would not go into the presence of a temperance fanatic.' Whenever we met we had to have a new introduction, would exchange tidings of our mutual friend, that was all; and repeat the same at our next meeting. This evening she stood apart, and with one swift glance took in my entire costume, then graciously advancing, extended her hand in greeting, and introduced her friends. Another victory you see for the white dress."

"How did all this affect your political convention work?" asked Elie.

"Capitally, it made many friends for us. We worked two weeks with the convention; the chosen leader of the cause calling his friends together, and holding a secret caucus

every night in a church to which they invited me to come, but I could not be permitted to bring anyone with me. I had never done any such work before, and was the only lady at the caucus.

"Each day we made our cause heard of in the convention. After two weeks of this work, they gave a whole day to discussion of this subject. No other question received any such consideration.

"The gallery was packed from early morning with such social leaders as contributed to make the reception a success, and flowers just rained from the gallery on those men who spoke for temperance.

"At four o'clock one of the most eloquent men in that country, by a five minute speech, of the most specious character, swayed the convention and killed the measure."

Elie was leaning forward, her eager eyes fixed on her friend's face, expecting to hear of an overwhelming victory, but when Margaret paused, she drew a long breath and exclaimed:

"Defeated, after all that work! How did you feel then, and what did you do?"

"To tell you the truth, I felt a certain admiration for the man who could in a few words so completely nullify all our hard work, just by the power of eloquence. It would pay to gain the influence of such a man as he. He went to the smoking room, and I immediately sent word to know if I could see him. The reply was that they were all smoking. I determined to see him notwithstanding. I suppose the room was blue with smoke, but I was wholly oblivious to that. I said, coming directly to the point upon which he dwelt in his speech:

"Judge B—, I want to know what substitute can be made for this measure, which will stand law? If you do not provide for it, you will oblige me to take the platform

against your movement, (in which I have much personal interest), and against many of you who have treated me like a sister all the years that I have been in this wild country. If God lays this duty upon me, it will be the most burdensome one I was ever called upon to perform ; and I believe it is not egotistical for me to say that I have as much platform influence as any one of you.

"He replied ; ' Miss Wayland, if you take the platform against us, you will not only ruin your own cause, but defeat the whole state movement.'

" 'But,' I said, 'I cannot so stultify myself with the temperance people, as to let this pass unnoticed ; your action must decide my duty.'

"He considered gravely for a moment, then said slowly :

" 'We can arrange that. The first State Legislature may submit any amendment, upon the petition of a respectable number of voters.'

" 'Well then,' said I, 'it must be mandatory, and a specific number of voters.'

" 'How many do you want, Miss Wayland ?' he asked.

" 'Five thousand, at least,' I replied.

" 'It shall be done,' said he.

"Two hours later every element in the convention was pledged to this. What is called the desperate element in the West, came to me and said :

" 'You get your kind of folks pledged to what you want and we will fix ours. You know there's not a man in this whole territory who knows your work, who will not like to see you triumph, though he cares nothing about the cause. You have always treated us like men, and we will stand by you.'

"The same man told me to be sure and see the husband of the lady I spoke of, a little while ago.

"How can I?" said I; 'she will hardly tolerate my presence, so I cannot expect any help from him.'

"O, you are mistaken,' said the man quickly, 'they have all changed, the tide has turned in your favor. I heard him say that he never dreamed you had so much common sense.'

"That, you see, was because I did not go off angry, when I could not get my own way. I never work for half a loaf of anything; but when I have labored faithfully for the whole, and can only secure half, I take that thankfully, and go on laboring for the remainder.

"One daily paper took our side, and another opposed us. I visited both each day, and when it was all over, I went to take leave of them, and when I visited the one who fought me all the way through, he said:

"Well, Miss Wayland, you and I do not think alike and probably never will.'

"No,' I said, 'but we can respect each other's opinions, and be honorable opponents.'

"He smiled, and extending his hand, exclaimed:

"You are certainly the most even tempered woman I ever saw. I certainly do like and respect you, for your uncompromising integrity, and conscientious work for what you believe to be right. Remember that you can never come to this city, without the courtesies of this paper being extended to you.'"

"Well," said Elie, drawing a long breath, as Margaret paused, "that is a pretty good story for a white dress, did you ever hear anything more of any of them?"

"Yes, when I came to Washington, and was so cruelly persecuted by Mr. Brass, and his emissaries, Judge B— and his wife and the lady I told you of, and her husband, were here in the city; they stood by me like old and true friends.

They deprecated any attempt on my part, to fight him here on his own ground, fearing that some injury might come to me; but promised me that they would assist me to extinguish him if I would wait until we arrived in Chicago, where I was as much respected as he was despised.

"I appreciated this kindness in my time of need, but I could not leave the Capital City, with a shadow over my usefulness; and I did not leave it until I had defeated the re-appointment of the man who had shown himself such a bitter enemy."

CHAPTER XIX.

CLOSE OF THE FORTY-NINTH CONGRESS.

Margaret received a few days later, a letter from her good and true friend Mrs. Morgan; enclosing the copy of Col. Winston's letter which had been sent to her, for her opinion of its contents; she said:

"I think Col. Winston and his wife are well mated. I am glad that you are free to do your life work without him; and I am sorry that you answered his last letter. I wish you could give up every thought of the man.

"If you are rightly informed, it would never have been a gain to win him; treacherous, deceiving, dishonorable, the tempter of a sinning woman,—so lost to decency as to prefer her to a good and true woman like you, and glorying in his shame.

"That is one view to take of it,—the other is this:

"If your information is false, as he says, then he has married the woman he really loves, and has offered you an indignity you should never forgive, in pretending to love you. I tremble for you. Do not see him at all."

Margaret immediately replied to this:

"You cannot know what your kindness and sympathy have been to me these last few weeks; but I think you do not quite appreciate the depths of the man's duplicity at this time. He doubtless thought that he could depend upon my generosity, to exonerate him with the President, when he came. He assumes a friendly tone and yet threatens the exposure of our correspondence to the President in defence of his boasted honor; and the last two letters were

evidently written with that object in view. I have no objection to showing the correspondence, except that I do not care to be the instrument, to involve him any deeper in the toils which he has spread for himself.

"In writing my last letter I answered his, and clearly represented his conduct as I understood it; and I am quite certain that in the face of that letter, he is not likely to insist upon showing the correspondence. I think that by that very means he is foiled, though it was unintentional on my part, to make it a weapon of defence.

"No sane woman could waste any regrets over the Ralph Winston of the present hour.

"If he had never crossed my path I might have been happy in the love of a good and estimable man, whom I respected; and I believe could have cared for, but he came with his handsome face and specious flatteries, his appearance of manly excellence and nobility of nature, and I loved him—now it is too late to rectify the mistake I made.

"I have never had any patience with the woman who would marry a man in desperation, because he loved her; and thus ruin his life, while she made her own condition a thousand-fold worse than if she had remained forever unmarried.

"You need not fear my meeting him, unless it is by accident; I live in a quiet home where a child may answer the bell, and usher into my presence, unannounced, anyone who calls; but I do not wish to meet him at all."

Margaret was resolved to avoid every place that there was any possibility of meeting Col. Winston as long as he remained in the city; she even determined to forbear calling upon any of the friends whom she had asked to serve him.

One Sunday morning she visited the office of her physician and there met Prof. de La Monte, whose acquaintance she had made some years before.

He spoke at once of the fact that Col. Winston was in the city, and said :

"He is here now with a scheme to give himself greater personal power, by placing himself beyond the reach of Executive appointment ; and you ought to use every influence you possess to defeat this scheme, for—excuse me—he has not only wronged you, but has spoken slightly of you in public places. A gentleman should not be permitted to call a lady a "crank " without being compelled to prove or retract the charge."

Margaret laughed lightly and said :

"That is not very bad,—the latest definition of 'crank,' I think, is this : 'A person ahead of the time in which he lives.' Such people's work lives after them longer than the ordinary man or woman."

"But he said you were insane," insisted the Professor.

"That is a question which time proves for itself. My position in the department is conclusive evidence against that."

"Well, I do not suppose that he can harm you, but his intention is to do so if he can, and your friends resent it."

"Yes, but I cannot stoop to avenge myself in any personal manner," she said earnestly.

"It is not like you to put self before duty, Miss Wayland, and it certainly is a duty to defeat their nefarious scheme. You ought to do all you can to stop it ; and if the element of self were not involved, you would omit nothing to baffle this object."

Margaret, ever alive to the call of duty, winced a little under the remarks of the Professor, but made no reply.

She immediately, however, repaired to East Capital Street to confer with her friend Inez. After repeating her conversation with the Professor, Inez said :

"I have heard that before ; it is well understood among

your friends that he is trying to convince the public of your insanity. That is absurd, on the face of it, and is something which he would better not discuss very fully."

Margaret, coming directly to the point, as she always did, not stopping to discuss the matter at all, asked quickly:

"Inez, can you do anything to defeat this last scheme?"

"Yes, and I will!" she answered; "it is much easier to block legislation than to get it through."

On her way home Margaret stopped to see Mrs. Wills. When her excited face presented itself Mrs. Wills exclaimed:

"What is the matter? You look, I do believe, as though you had lost your temper for once."

"You will at least confess that it is a righteous indignation when you hear the reason why." Then turning to Mr. Wills she said:

"What do you think that Col. Winston is saying?" and replying to a questioning look she continued, "He says that I am insane."

"Did he truly say that?" asked Mr. Wills indignantly, "well, he would better not say it to me, the coward!"

"You use strong terms," said Mrs. Wills.

"I mean them, too," he answered; "a man who will openly boast that a lady of character and standing is insane as one of his victims, glorying in the devastation he claims to have wrought, deserves no better appellation." Then turning to Margaret, he said:

"I think you may be thankful for what you have escaped."

"He may be thankful for what he has escaped, for had I been so unfortunate as to marry a man of his—at present—presumable character, I should send for my father to come for me so quickly, that the man who had deceived me into marriage would think that the day of reckoning had come for him beyond a doubt. Was there ever a truer illustra-

tion of the depths to which a loveless marriage will reduce a man?"

"Not if he ever was what you believed him to be; but is it not possible that your influence upon him when in your company, may have made him appear more manly and upright than he really had any claim to being, ordinarily?"

"Mr. Wills, I was not deceived in that; his intellectual powers are second to none. There is nothing bad at heart about him. His recent behavior is the result of this unhappy entanglement. This marriage would better have been honorably prevented at the eleventh hour, than to be bitterly repented in the twelfth."

After a few minutes silence, Mr. Wills said:

"Well, Miss Wayland, what are you going to do about this latest development? Your manner betrays the fact that you have some definite purpose in view. You need never hesitate to ask me to do anything; if I can, I will with pleasure; if I cannot, I will honestly tell you so."

Margaret hesitated a moment, for she knew that when she had once committed herself, there would be no going back; then in an even passionless tone, recounted all she had heard from Prof. de La Monte, and finished by saying:

"The Professor has convinced me, that my duty lies in the direction of helping to defeat Col. Winston's present purposes."

"There can certainly be no better way for you to recover from the effects of his treachery," answered Mr. Wills.

"It is all a wretched business," said she, "but while I know that failure and humiliation are the greatest real benefit to him, yet it does not seem quite right that I should help to bring it about."

"Much like cauterizing a wound, I confess," said Mr. Wills, smiling; "but the safest in the end, I suspect, for you both."

Margaret drooped her proud head, and said in a low reverent tone:

"I have prayed all summer to be permitted to help him in some way, but I did not expect to be answered like this."

"But you still wish to defeat his projects, do you not?" he asked.

"I do."

"I will tell you then what I have done. A member of the Appropriation Committee, came to me and said:

"We are going to cut down the Bezoor appropriation again this year. You secured it last year, and we want you to let us alone this time. Col. Winston is here lobbying, but it will probably do him no good. I think he would much better have stayed at home.' I said in reply:

"It is all right; I have no special interest in Bezoor."

"You remember," continued Mr. Wills, "that I told you when you brought the paper containing his marriage notice, that I would never cross my threshold to serve him again; and you were quite hurt about it at that time."

"Yes, I remember; but since then I have lost my confidence in the man's integrity of purpose; and would check him if it can be done."

"It can, Miss Wayland; Col. Winston has spoken to me about the appropriation, asking if I thought it could be secured again this year; but I gave him no encouragement. He has never as much as said 'thank you' for all the personal work which I did for him last session. As to his new schemes, there is not a shadow of possibility of their being reached this year, so you do not need to trouble yourself about that. The time has not yet come to fight, but I believe you are ready for the fray; you are a very fearless woman."

"It is an inherent fearlessness, the element of cowardice, moral or physical, never had any part in my being; but

this experience has revolutionized my whole existence. I do not believe that I could ever make another speech, if I knew, it would save the world."

"O, yes, you could, and you will, too," said Mr. Wills, laughing.

Margaret was a born politician, and could no more help joining in its melee, and fighting its issues, than she could help wearing the Wayland nose or chin; and Mr. Wills knew it.

Like a trained war-horse she heard the noise of battle from afar, and in spite of herself, discussed its issues and probabilities.

"Do you think the heads of the tickets of '84 will be repeated in '88?" she asked.

"It looks like it now," replied Mr. Wills, and with a sudden thought he added, "What do you think will be the issues of the coming campaign?"

"Political wire-workers have not been idle the past two years," she answered, "and 'The Plumed Knight' has been playing his cards quietly in many ways. I have been told that he has said that he would be President of the United States or destroy the Republican party. He is assuming to take a great interest in the Catholic Church, to be able to secure the Catholic vote; and one of his recent schemes is to manipulate the labor vote, in the interest of monopolies.

"If the Republicans could succeed in '88, one more monopoly administration would place the relations of capital and labor, where nothing could avert insurrection, with all the horrors of a French revolution.

"The monopolies manage now to control, body and soul, enough Senators and Congressmen, to defeat all legislation in the interests of the people. An honest President is all the protection the laboring classes have left.

"A prominent Treasury official told me recently, that

the increase of the surplus that month had been a half-million per day,—a half-million per day which ought to be oiling the wheels of business, tied up in the Treasury vaults;—and if you speak of it to the average Congressman, he will propose to repeal the tax on whiskey, tobacco or some other luxury, but still continue the tax on everything a laboring man eats, wears, or has to buy as necessities to make a home comfortable.

“The monopolies are very short-sighted, that they cannot realize how valueless their possessions will be, when the moiling millions have been goaded to madness by their continued injustice.

“If the Republican leader of '84 is re-nominated in '88, the President will be likely to conclude, before the campaign is over, that ‘when a nation’s life is in danger, there is no time to think of men.’”

“What do you mean by that, Miss Wayland?”

“I mean that he will be less conventional, less fastidious about the means by which the desired end is accomplished, he will perhaps, think that a woman’s voice can speak for justice and the public good, with advantage to the cause she advocates.”

“Yes, I think he is extremely conservative; and probably thinks that there are men enough to manage the affairs of the country,” said Mr. Wills.

“That is not strange,” answered Margaret, “when you consider that his life has been passed in the atmosphere of Eastern conservatism.”

“What do you really think about it Miss Wayland? I have understood that you are not a ‘Woman’s Rights’ woman in the common acceptation of the term, and in the knowledge of your work in the political field, I have often wondered how you reconciled the two.”

“Easily, Mr. Wills; I have always believed in a

woman's right to defend a good cause, or advocate a righteous administration of justice; but I, myself, do not care for the right of suffrage. My argument for woman's public work in the political field is this; that 'Greek must meet Greek' if the 'tug of war' is equal. There is an army of women at work in the Republican party, doing such work as only a woman can offset; and men will awaken to a knowledge of this if they ever find time to examine the record book of 'leaves,' during the years of Republican rule; when they will find in these official records, that women were given 30 and 60 days election leave, in addition to their annual leave; and every penny of their salary paid during such service, is virtually stolen from the people to conduct political campaigns; not in their interest, but in that of machine politicians."

"Do you know that there are such records, Miss Wayland?"

"I do, and it is in consequence of such knowledge, that I am no longer in favor of the party that will permit such things, I believe further, that the men who make politics a trade, of all parties, will join the Republican ranks in '88, because they believe that whatever becomes of the country, the Republicans will take good care of the machine politicians."

"One might easily infer that you expect the Republicans to triumph," said Mr. Wills, with a smile.

"Oh, no;" answered Margaret earnestly; "I believe confidently that if re-nominated the President will be re-elected, through the instrumentalities of the same God who sent the storm to destroy the Spanish Armada; and who put the cry of 'Rum, Romanism and Rebellion' into the voice of a Burchard."

Mr. Wills smiled, as she enthusiastically voiced her

opinion; while she immediately rose to take leave of her kind friends.

She laughed, and said as she looked from one to the other: "You are such good listeners that I am always betrayed into remaining much longer than I intend."

Margaret waited but a few days before again visiting Inez. Her friend was delighted to see her, and drawing forward her easy chair, said:

"Sit, you busy woman," then clasping her small hands behind her she looked carelessly over the tired face, the restless hands, the eager, ready-to-move position, as Margaret sat bolt upright in the inviting piece of upholstery; then changing swiftly the expression of her face, Inez said, with flashing eyes, and the manner of one who would strike you down, and then gravely wonder who could have done it:

"Who do you think can be defeating all of Ralph Winston's measures before Congress? He wanted a public building at Bezoor, and that is defeated."

She then recounted one by one, the various measures he desired, and closed with:

"Neither house of Congress have acted favorably on anything he wanted."

"Well," said Margaret, "someone is evidently working for the interest of the country."

Inez turned, in her quick way, toward Margaret, and asked: "By the way, Margaret, when were you introduced to Col. Winston?"

"I have not the least idea; it seems to me I have always known him; why do you ask?"

"Because he has said that he was never introduced to you, and that you came to his hotel complaining that you had been badly treated by his state delegation, and asking him to set you right with them."

Margaret's cheeks flushed hotly for a moment, then she said:

"His conscience must trouble him badly; and his time hang heavily on his hands, if he has nothing better to do, than to disclaim an acquaintance—which he took special pains to cultivate less than a year ago."

"That is not all," said Inez indignantly; "he says that he was obliged to come all the way from Bezoor, solely to protect his private interests, which you were injuring with your busy tongue. I have heard all this and more; and mind you, I always strike back."

"Did you learn in what way this was being done?"

"O, yes; by traducing him to the President; but he says that he put an effectual stop to it when he arrived."

"Do you suppose," said Margaret, "that he ever thinks of the fact, that every man must stand upon the record of his own acts?"

"Well, I have, and will use all my influence to defeat every project which he has set his heart upon; he need not expect to build himself up at the expense of any friend of mine."

A flash of intelligence passed from one pair of eyes to the other, but not another word was spoken.

The closing days of Congress were very exciting ones at the Capitol. The crowd in the corridors and galleries the night before adjournment was something terrible; each time a person retired from the gallery, the press to secure that vacated seat made egress almost an impossibility. Following adjournment came the leave-takings, and Margaret had her share of this sort of pain. Not for a whole year could she hope to look again upon the face of her loyal friend, Mrs. Wills.

She found them busy enough preparing to go, but not

too busy to stop for a little visit with her. It was natural to discuss the year's legislation, and Margaret said :

"Was there ever a more disgraceful piece of legislation than the indigent pension bill?"

"It was simply a premium on mendicancy and perjury," said Mr. Wills, and he continued: "By the way, I have never heard you say anything about the educational bill."

"I have always held the champion of the measure in such high personal esteem, that I have not cared to discuss it," said she. "I have never supposed that it had a chance of passing, or that I could influence its fate either way; yet, I have always felt that its success would be a national calamity; do you not think so?"

Mr. Wills answered the question by saying: "I think the President put it about right as to this case, when he said in his veto of the Texas seed bill, that the people should take care of the government. I do not think the public school system a matter for the general government."

"If the government were going into the public school business," said Margaret, "I think the plan of a Catholic priest where I live is much better than the present bill."

"What is his plan?"

"To have all the schools incorporated, and have so much of Bible principle, exclusive of doctrine, as Catholic and Protestant alike agree upon, taught compulsorily in the schools."

"What portion of the Bible did the priest propose to have taught?"

"I think he spoke of the 'Ten Commandments.' I have studied this question somewhat, and find that other countries have come to see this necessity also. Russia's experience is an illustration; she had a compulsory school law, but no Christian teaching during the educational period, till she found that she was becoming a nation of

educated demons. Not to teach that there is a God, in the schools, is in effect to teach that there is no God; and Russia seeing this, made Christian teaching compulsory.

"Really, the indifference and lack of religious culture among the children of our public schools is appalling, when we consider that they are the future mothers, fathers, and defenders of our nation.

"I claim that education with us now means simply, fitting children to get a living by their wits, instead of work; and our system being destitute of the industrial element, is therefore lacking, and responsible for this state of things, which unfits the student for honest toil."

"There is undoubtedly much truth in what you say," said Mr. Wills, "but I still think this is not a matter for general legislation."

Shaking her head slightly, Miss Wayland replied:

"The country may yet find that she will have to make it her matter. All the interest politicians have in this measure, is as a means of breaking the 'Solid South' for partisan ends. If it is ever broken on any issue before the people, it will be prohibition. No one regrets the 'Solid South' more than the people of that section.

"The last time that I was there, representative men told me that a more unhealthy political condition than theirs, could not be conceived, that there was no one to watch the public administration of affairs; and if a corrupt man secured office, it required a quarrel in the family to impeach and remove him, but that so long as the *post-bellum* persecution of the South, on the part of the North, continued, the 'Solid South' would remain intact.

"My informant further said: 'If you wonder what this means, let me give you one illustration of the last Presidential campaign; which is only a repetition of every return of that period since the war. Our colored people were secretly

gathered for night-meetings in the woods, to listen to incendiary colored orators, sent by the Republicans of the North to tell the people that they would all be returned to slavery if Cleveland was elected; and to prevent this calamity they must burn buildings, and murder the people. They were also told that arms and ammunition would be furnished them from the northern ship just outside the harbor. The first intimation we had of this was by overhearing the excited people talking about it. When the sheriff arrested the fanatical orator, another man was killed, and a story of the massacre of blacks and the suppression of their rights to the ballot, was forthwith telegraphed all over the North for campaign purposes.'

"In my investigations of the re-construction period some curious things were told me; they said that among their official records were school teachers' receipts signed with their mark; and their superintendents and officials could not write their own names. In the county with the largest colored vote in Arkansas,—previous to the war, the taxes for county expenses had never quite reached \$10,000 a year. During the six years of carpet-bag rule the government collected \$45,000 per year for taxes; and in addition to this left the county \$260,000 in debt, which they have since paid.

"Do you think it any wonder that the only political issue with the South is: 'Local government by the intelligent element of the community; and an equal right of both sections, in the councils of the nation?'"

"No, I do not, Miss Wayland; but I think you collected a deal of information in a thirty day's trip."

"I tried to," she said, "having gone for that purpose. I did not waste any time, and arranged through correspondence to meet at the New Orleans Exposition, as many as I could of the people with whom I had corresponded during the campaign."

"By the way, Miss Wayland, to-day's Marianna paper states that Col. Winston surprised them by appearing on the streets after they had looked for him in vain for all the previous week; but there is no mention of his wife, what do you think of that?"

"It certainly still seems that there is some mystery about it all," said she, "one would naturally suppose that if his statement is correct, and his wife the free choice of his heart, that he would be pleased to present her to his friends in his own city."

"The whole matter has indeed furnished food for conjecture," said Mr. Wills, "his hurried marriage, his immediate departure, his strange behavior, his delay in reaching Washington on his return, and all the circumstances connected with this marriage, give rise to many queries in the minds of all those who have been in any way connected with him."

"I have never thought, Mr. Wills, that he intended to live with his wife, but I believe that in some way his designs have been circumvented, and he is now compelled to reap the reward of his ill-doing."

"Do you think he is quite himself?" said Mr. Wills. "Sometimes I have thought that his mental equilibrium was somewhat disturbed."

"I have no way of judging except by his letters;" she answered, "and from the one written in October I should say that your inferences were correct. He usually writes the most beautiful hand that I ever saw; as uniform and plain as print, but the chirography of this letter was irregular and blurred; only enough like his to identify it as being an autograph letter; while it was unlike him in many respects. It was wholly insincere, strained and studied, and inferior to his style in every respect. It was evidently written in a state of unusual excitement and apprehension."

"He had just begun to see the danger of meddling with edged tools, I imagine."

Margaret soon bid her friends "good-bye" and hastened home.

CHAPTER XX.

A FATAL ACCIDENT.

The Forty-Ninth Congress closed at noon, March 4th, 1887, leaving Ralph Winston's measures no further advanced than when by his own act, he made it impossible for Margaret to ask her friends to serve him further.

The bill in charge of Congressman Wills, upon which the committee made unanimous favorable report, and to which there was no opposition in the House, remained in the hands of the committee, and died there. The same was true of the bill in Congressman Garmoil's charge; and all new measures shared the same fate.

Soon after Congress adjourned, Elie and Margaret were walking in the corridor one morning, when with seeming hesitation, Elie said :

"Have you seen the charges against Col. Winston?"

"Yes, some time ago," answered Margaret briefly.

"Congressman Jennings showed them to me last night; what do you think about them?"

"They count for nothing."

"But they have been confirmed by affidavit," said Elie.

"Have you any knowledge of the reliability of the deponent?"

"No, I have not."

"Neither have I, and I know this,—I have seen charges mountain high piled up in these departments, supported by affidavits, which I knew were not worth half as much as the paper on which they were written. Prof. de La Monte showed me the charges sometime since, and I told him that

I thought I knew enough about one of them, to discredit the rest,"

"What could be the motive of the author I wonder?"

"He may want Col. Winston's place, or there may be other reasons," Margaret replied quickly.

"Why are you so ready to defend that man, Margaret?"

"For the same reason that I would defend you if you were attacked, or any other friend. Do you think," she continued, "that it would flatter my vanity any, to be convinced that Ralph Winston is a scoundrel?"

"What else has he been to you?" asked Elie indignantly.

"A most ardent lover, whose sentiments were fully reciprocated by a nature as intense as his own," answered Margaret with a flushing cheek.

"And you will believe nothing against him?"

"I will believe nothing against his business integrity until it is proven to be true beyond a shadow of doubt, then I will assent with my head; but my heart can never doubt him."

"Would you not be indignant if you knew he had been talking about you in an ungentlemanly manner?"

"My childish years have passed away, and with them my childish character; such talk could injure no one but its author."

"Margaret, how strange you are; I have thought that I never wanted to speak to him again, since I was told of a remark he made about you. He said that you were a crank."

Margaret smiled as she replied: "Did you hear that? I trust that I can judge people by their treatment of me."

"His course of action this winter, has, according to all reports, been that of a man who finds himself in so undesirable a position that his mind is more or less affected by it;

and his conduct therefore, that of one almost irresponsible. While the charges referred to amount to nothing, I have at the same time, direct information from reliable men, who have been at the same hotel with him ; which convinces me that he has not been as faithful to his duty as he might have been. If my conjectures are true, I must believe that a man of his affectionate nature, bound by an uncongenial marriage, as his must be, remorsefully dwelling on 'what might have been,' hopeless of the future, would naturally lose his bearings and drift away from the right. I can imagine that when he is at Bezoer, to keep up excitement, kill time, and drown thought, he may use his position as capital for business purposes, indulging in the wildest speculative schemes ; little thinking of the right or wrong of the matter. If he does not lose his official position, it will be more by good fortune than good management."

"And can no one convince you that he maliciously deceived you?"

"No one but himself, and no words of his could convince me, while he gives so many indications of remorse for the past. I cannot deny that he withheld the whole truth from me, in dwelling upon the fact that his daughter was all that stood between us and happiness ; thus preventing the least suspicion in my mind, that he was under any obligations to any one else. I still think that he meant to honorably release himself, if such was the case."

"And you still believe that he parted with you, with honorable intentions toward you?"

"I have never doubted it, except a few unhappy hours after the receipt of that letter. Men who make a pastime of breaking the hearts of women, and find a special fascination in victimizing those of high standing, are not like Ralph Winston, whose honest love spoke in every look and act."

"Ah, Margaret, and he was wronging you even then,

knowing of the entanglement, and looking love to you. I think his October letter the most outrageous thing that was ever penned by mortal."

"I cannot deny that; but it was written in desperation and terror at the thought of being in disgrace with the President, whom he regards with absolute reverence;—that letter was written for his perusal, not mine. I know that he knows that it was false; but I cannot help admiring the audacity of the man, in daring to take such a stand; it is the lion driven to bay,—not the sneaking prairie wolf which does not show itself in the light of day."

"Have you given up the idea of a compulsory marriage?" asked Elie.

"All that I know about that, is conjecture. She may have convinced him that he owed her reparation, for having been a party to the folly that led to her separation from her husband; and he may have decided that from the world's stand-point she was right.

"He seemed to me the most strictly honorable of all the men I have ever known."

This was one of the many conversations that took place between Margaret and her friend, always leaving them in the same place; Elie indignantly repudiating Col. Winston's right to be considered a gentleman; and Margaret defending him against all aspersions.

During all the weeks that Colonel and Mrs. Winston remained at the Arlington, their names did not appear in the society columns, as is usual with people of their distinguished position. The Colonel's name was never seen as formerly, in the list of those who had that day called upon the President.

Aside from notices of charges against him, and demands for his removal; their arrival taken from the hotel register,

was all the newspaper notice accorded them while in the Capital City.

Evidently some powerful adverse influence had been brought to bear against him. He began to be aware before he left the city, that Margaret Wayland's friends were many and powerful. They did not attack him openly, but simply let him alone. There is nothing so exasperating to a proud man, as to be ignored. He left the city feeling that his mission was unaccomplished, and his future work uncertain.

The Marianna papers of March 29th, announced that Col. Winston having settled up some business matters which were detaining him, left the city Tuesday, on his return to his far-away territory.

"Mrs. Winston accompanies the Colonel, having joined him at Shawanee yesterday, coming down from Hemphill, where she was visiting friends."

This item fully confirmed the belief of Col. Winston's friends, that he did not intend to take his wife to his own home city.

Margaret meanwhile thought: "This episode of my life is over, and Ralph Winston has gone as surely out of it, as though the grave had closed over him. I am no weak girl to yield to a life-long sorrow; and the future has possibilities of usefulness for me yet."

Not long after the announcement of the departure of Col. Winston and wife for Bezoar, when Margaret began to think that they must have reached their destination, Elie came into Room 58 one morning, holding in her hand the New York Daily Ventilator. She seemed to be in a state of uncontrollable agitation, and unable to speak, placed the paper before Margaret, pointing to the following telegram:

FATAL BOILER EXPLOSION.

Special to The New York Daily Ventilator:

POINT PICKET, April 10.—At a few minutes before eleven o'clock to-day, the boiler of the steamer Marie,—which plies between Point

Picket and Bezoor,—exploded with terrific violence, entirely demolishing the engine room ; the smoke-stack was completely destroyed, and the steamer injured to the extent of many thousand dollars. Several persons were killed, and many more or less injured.

Then followed a list of the killed, among whom was the wife of Col. Winston. He was on shore at the time transacting some personal business.

As Margaret's eyes glanced over this dispatch, an observer would scarcely have conceived that the subject had any personal interest for her. A little dilation of the dark eyes, a quickly vanishing flush which dyed neck and brow for a moment, that was all,—as she returned the paper to Elie, saying solemnly :

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

"What an awful visitation of Providence," said Elie, shuddering as she spoke.

"Do not speak of it," answered Margaret quietly; "Elie, if you love me, do not mention this again."

Elie gave her friend a quick, comprehensive glance, and without a word returned to her own room. Margaret's self-control was marvellous, she would not even allow herself to think of the possibilities of the future, now that Ralph Winston was a free man, but awe-struck at the doom which had overtaken her rival, she felt a thrill of pity for the wife whose happiness—if happiness it was—had been so suddenly destroyed. And the horror-stricken face of Ralph Winston seemed to appear before her like a dream.

CHAPTER XXI

PROMOTIONS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

On the Monday following the promulgation of the famous rules of the Civil Service Commission, governing promotions,—among Miss Wayland's early callers was Prof. de La Monte.

These rules being the universal topic of conversation among all government employes at this time, they fell at once into a discussion of their merits.

"I should like to know your opinion of the new regulations," said the Professor.

"I think the administration has touched the pulse of the people; or will have done so when they come to know what it signifies, as they have scarcely done in anything before this," answered Margaret in her usual straightforward manner. "Nothing of National importance has impressed me with its significance as this has done, for some time, and I have thought deeply upon the subject. It means honest and permanent reform in the Civil Service, if strictly adhered to."

"You speak with much feeling, Miss Wayland," said the Professor.

"I feel deeply upon this subject, for I have been behind the scenes."

"You mean, I suppose, that you have studied the workings of the law, do you not?"

"I have not only done that, but have had some experience; having received my own appointment after many months of effort, in accordance with the provisions of the

original law; which was so drafted as to make the letter kill the spirit, in one important particular.

"This provision was made for the benefit of Republicans instead of Democrats. The fact is that the former used the law as an advertisement under the specious term of reform, while they operated it to carry out the spoils system in the most pernicious manner; pushing political workers through to the highest point by fraudulent examinations, while they said to the people they did not want:

" 'We are powerless to do anything for you; the Civil Service law bars us out.'

"Merit counted for, virtually, nothing, in the Republican manipulations of the law. One illustration will sufficiently explain what I mean. A competent young business man of New England, for curiosity, merely, passed the Civil Service examination, never expecting to hear anything more from it. Suddenly one day he received notice that he had been certificated to a \$900 clerkship. His salary at the time exceeded this, but the glamour of Washington life, and the hope of speedy promotion, induced him to accept the position. He came to his post, and remained there, but received no promotion. He was a Republican, but not a political worker.

"When this administration came in, he was receiving but \$900 still. A call came to the Bureau chief where he was employed, for some work to be done as quickly as possible, and requiring superior qualifications to accomplish it.

"The Republican official to whom the Bureau chief applied for a special detail for the work, sent this Mr. Balch.

"The first question asked Mr. Balch was: 'Are you good at figures?'

" 'I would prefer that my work should speak for itself, sir, I will try to satisfy you,' he replied.

" 'Do you understand the new French metre system?' continued his interlocutor.

"'No, sir, it has been put in the text books since I left school; but I will look it up to-night and report to you to-morrow.'

"The morrow came and another interview between clerk and Bureau chief.

"'The Cabinet head of the Department wants this work accomplished within a week; can you do it?' asked the chief.

"'I think I can prepare in a day, as much work as more than one of your best clerks can complete in a week,' replied the young man.

"Six more clerks were detailed to do the work required, and in two weeks it was completed, when there was another interview between chief and clerk.

"'Mr. Balch,' said the chief, 'you are receiving only \$900 salary.'

"'That is all, sir,' answered the clerk modestly.

"'That certainly is an injustice which I cannot permit to be continued,' said the chief decidedly.

"Mr. Balch now receives \$1,400, which he should have had long ago. Such men as he were kept at \$900, under Republican rule, to do the same work of keeping the departments running; while the places ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,800 were given to political wire-pullers, to keep the political machine running.

"Many of the latter class never did a half hour's work at the departments, but always attended the base ball matches, and Ivy City races. Some of these were newspaper correspondents who never visited their desks at the departments, excepting on pay-day. There were still others, who did nothing but lobby before Congress or the departments.

"The Democrats came in and worked industriously for real reform. They found themselves handicapped by prominent Democrats endorsing the most incompetent clerks

in return for personal favors rendered them when the administration was Republican. This work is individual. The people and the Democratic party must suffer for it. I have watched this evil, until I was terrified for the future of the party."

"I can see, Miss Wayland, that if each Democratic Senator and member, and the influential ex-senators and members endorsed only one person each,—and they probably do not confine themselves to that number,—what an army of incompetent clerks the government would be compelled to sustain."

"It is this, Professor, which has made removals so slow, and the inconsistency seems unaccountable.

"One of the most worthless clerks in government employ renders a personal service to an influential Democratic Senator, which saves the latter from paying out his own money annually, to some other person for this service; and for this the Senator endorses him in his place. I am told that this Senator denounces the administration, objects to Civil Service Reform, and demands that Democrats shall hold all the offices; while he does his full share to prevent its possibility."

"I do not see how Democrats can do that for which Republicans were voted out, and expect to retain place and power. Of course, it is well known in Washington, that Republicans have been carrying their house-servants on the government pay-roll till the tax-payers were tired of such tactics; but a change of administration in name only, without a change of methods, will not be tolerated long," said the Professor thoughtfully.

"You can see then, can you not, how the new rules will remove incompetency, by law, which never could have been done in any other way; because of the 'veiled goddess,' known as 'Political Influence?'"

"Yes, but Miss Wayland, there is another more powerful influence than that, incidental to it, however; I mean 'Social Influence.'"

"You are right, sir; that is the most pernicious of all, no one could refuse to endorse one in their social circle. Social influence knows no party, and many of those who are most charming in society, are least efficient in all practical work. This is one of the most serious difficulties in the Departments. The Bureau chief knows the office record, but the Cabinet head alone has the removing power; and the clerk can bring all his social influence to bear so that he can more than offset the official record. I am satisfied that the Departments can never be purified except by law."

"I suppose, Miss Wayland, that there is the same agitation in your department, as elsewhere?"

"O, yes, there is nothing else discussed; some of them put on long faces, and say: 'I do not expect any promotions from this administration,' and this class probably could not earn half their present salary at anything else;—others try to conceal their chagrin by an affectation of indifference and raillery. One of the latter class talks in this way:

"'O, girls, did I ever tell you what I did when I was examined for my promotion? I had it all written out on the drapery of the muslin dress I wore.'"

"Of course the group of listeners looked shocked, but she continued, 'I did truly; I never could have passed in any other way, for I never could write a decimal in my life. I have the dress still in my trunk, just as I wore it,' and tossing her saucy head, she added with mock earnestness; 'I will lend it to any of you, there is nothing mean about me;—by the way, I have a notion to present that dress to the government to put in the museum by the side of George Washington's pantaloons, as a memento of how we Republicans run Civil Service.'"

"Of course we all laughed, for how could we help it?"

"What do the men clerks say about it?"

"Everything under the sun, and they do not mince matters, either. I have heard one say exultingly:

"I know one office where there are two \$1,400 clerks doing messenger work, because they are not competent to fill a single desk in the office; the new rules will clean them out."

"Another one said: 'Judge Leiddy will have to go now.'"

"The gentleman with whom he was talking replied:

"The rules do not apply to \$1,800 clerks."

"I was standing by and could not help saying:

"You will find that they do when it comes to the test."

"Who is Judge Leiddy?" asked the Professor.

"Why, he is one of the reduced officials who held a prominent position as an executive officer many years. The old clerks say that he was of no account at his best estate. He does little now but go around visiting the clerks, regardless of all rules, as a sort of privileged person. His endorser is one of the best and most influential Democrats in the country,—a lawyer of National reputation, who knows little or nothing about the Departments, but for whom Judge Leiddy did a great personal favor when the administration was Republican. In return this grateful Democrat goes to the Cabinet head of Judge Leiddy's department, and secures his personal promise to retain the Judge, and charge him to his account.

"A more delightful man of society is seldom met, than Judge Leiddy. His conversational powers are unsurpassed. It would be of little avail for the Bureau chief to report to the removing power that this man was of no use in the interests of the public service. His personal appearance would belie the report.

"A large proportion of the reduced officials are without doubt duplicates of Judge Leiddy,—simply pensioners by

courtesy, to which the tax-payers have never given their consent."

"You seem to have given this matter very serious consideration, Miss Wayland; I have not chanced to meet anyone who attaches as much importance to the new rules, as you do."

"I do not think that they cover the whole ground; but they are an important step in the right direction. The civil service law ought to apply to our secret service in some way, and all our inspection service; at least these places should be filled by men put there for possessing other qualifications, than having done political work.

"To illustrate this, permit me to tell you a little incident. After this administration came in, a solid business man from a New England city, came here, and applied to an official whom I know, asking him to look up clerk hire receipts, for services claimed to have been rendered by the wife of the Post Master in that city. He found that such clerk hire had been allowed to that office for years past, by the Post Office Department, and found the receipts for payment on file.

"‘Now,’ said the stranger, ‘my place of business is directly opposite the Post Office; and I know as a matter of fact, that the wife of that Post Master has never rendered the office one hour’s service. Will you please tell me how to have this fraud detected?’

"‘We can have an inspector sent out,’ replied the official.

"The business man, with a curl of his lip, and an impatient movement, said testily: ‘What good would that do? An inspector has already been sent out, and the Post Master met him at the depot, with his own carriage, took him to his home, entertained him handsomely, and the two went away for a two week’s fishing excursion. The inspector returned to Washington, I suppose to render an account of his inves-

tigations,—but we know them to have been wholly in the piscatorial line.’”

“Well, it does look as if an inspector should have been sent after the inspector,” said the Professor laughing heartily; “but, Miss Wayland, I am extending my call to an unconscionable length, for I have been greatly interested in listening to your version of the new rules.” Bowing himself out, he walked away thinking over the conversation of the last hour, and saying to himself:

“That woman is possessed of a clear and logical mind, and knows what she is talking about.”

About 3 o'clock one May afternoon, sitting at her desk at the Department,—Margaret said in an undertone, to a young lady at her side:

“What can be the matter with me? I am so nervous,—I do not more than half know what I am doing. I wonder if the electricity from this approaching storm could so affect me.”

It was many months since she had experienced any such unusual nervous condition. She was obliged to select the simplest work on her desk, to make up the time until four o'clock, when she walked slowly home trying to steady herself, for—she knew not what. Every nerve was strung to its utmost tension, and a feverish expectation thrilled her veins, flushed her cheeks, and lit the dark eyes with more than their wonted brilliancy.

Finding the house entirely alone, she entered with her latch-key and going directly to the table where she usually found her mail, looked eagerly for a letter. There was no sign of one,—she even looked around the room thinking it might have been mislaid; and then with a feeling of disappointment, said to herself:

“I have never experienced this sensation of positive

expectancy without finding a letter or something to justify it; what can it all mean?"

As she removed her hat and wrap, a ring at the door-bell startled her. She immediately answered it, and Ralph Winston stepped into the hall.

It required but an instant for her to take in the whole situation. His haggard looks, told better than words could have done, that she had not suffered alone. An earnest look, more pathetic than tears, an appealing, pleading, unspoken prayer for forgiveness, more eloquent than words, was all she saw;—and with one step forward she was clasped in his arms. No words were necessary, but he knew, and the Recording Angel witnessed, that Ralph Winston was forgiven.

[THE END.]

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